

MIENNONITE

Historical Bulletin

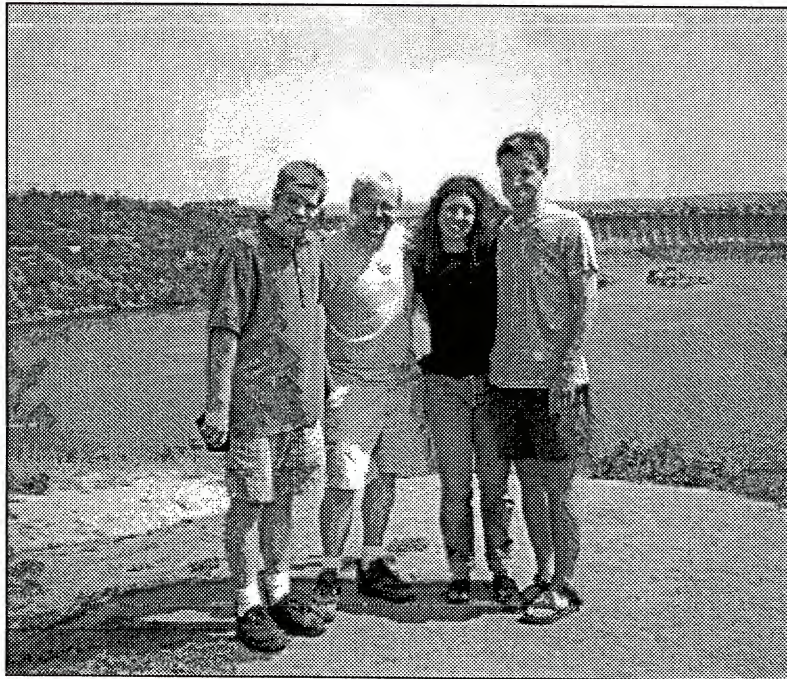
Vol. LXII

January 2001

ISSN 0025-9357

No. 1

In the Footsteps of Clayton Kratz



Above: Twenty-four-year-old Clayton Kratz. Photo credit: MCC Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

Left: Four on a quest: Tim Kennel, Peter Eash Scott, Katherine Lemon and Sidney King. Photo credit: Tim Kennel.

By Sidney King

For three young Mennonites in 1920, it was undoubtedly a fantastic adventure. On their way to administer relief supplies to the war- and famine-stricken Russian Mennonites, Arthur Slagel (1891-1943), Orie O. Miller (1892-1977) and Clayton Kratz traveled from New York to Athens to the interior of Russia by boat, train, motorcycle and carriage, along the way experiencing new worlds of beauty, strangeness, extravagance, and ultimately, danger. Their journey took them from the art museums of Italy to a meeting with the Pope to the teeming streets of

Constantinople. The experience left none of them unchanged.

Eighty years later and under very different circumstances, the four of us were also on a journey of discovery, from standing at the gleaming stones of the Acropolis, to hearing a 100-year-old Russian Mennonite woman describe firsthand the horrors of the famine and Nestor Machno's reign of terror, to crossing the moonlit Black Sea on the Caledonia. While on one level it was a journey of immediate and experiential discovery, on another level the sights and sounds we encountered along the way also led us to new levels of discovery in the story of Clayton Kratz.

The basic elements of the story

are familiar. Clayton Kratz, a rising senior at Goshen College, popular, talented, full of promise, engaged to be married, leaves on the brink of his final year of college to accept the call of the fledgling Mennonite Central Committee to administer relief to Russian Mennonites suffering from civil war and famine. He was the third man chosen to accompany two already selected, Arthur Slagel and Orie Miller. Slagel, of Flanagan, Illinois, was a young professor at Hesston College with remarkable linguistic skills eager to make a contribution in the area of active nonviolence and service. At the age of 28, Miller, of Akron, Pennsylvania, was already making a name for himself as

fledgling church leader, with overseas experience in the Near East relief effort.

Two months into the trip Kratz disappears, leaving only a scant paper trail and many unanswered questions in his wake. Through the haze of history it is difficult to get a firm grasp on the personal face of Kratz; it is much easier to treat him as an icon or archetype, but to do this betrays the depth of the story.

Born in 1896 in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, the sixth child of Elizabeth and William Kratz, Clayton was by all accounts a well-behaved and well-liked boy who exuded promise. He was the first in his family to attend college, enrolling at Goshen College after teaching school. His list of academic and extracurricular accomplishments at Goshen is enough to make any parent swell with pride: member of the baseball team, prize-winning orator, president of the junior class – the list seems endless. (He was even elected “best-looking” by his classmates.) Pictures from the time show a confident young man, at times properly dressed and looking serious, at other times clearly at ease and enjoying himself with friends.

The contrast of Kratz's almost charmed life at Goshen with his final days in Russia is almost too large to fathom. This contrast is one aspect of the story that makes it so compelling.

What was the road that took Kratz from his world as a popular and gifted student to being arrested, beaten, and disappearing in the freezing predawn cold of a war-torn Russia? That road began when Kratz received a telegram from the MCC office asking him to be the third man – to join Miller and Slagel on the trip to Russia. Kratz was given two days to respond, but he needed less than one, postponing his academic career and leaving behind all he knew to enter a world of which he knew virtually nothing, only that he was needed.

It is difficult to imagine the full breadth of experiences and responses he must have had along the way, and he and his companions left precious little that shed light on their personal feelings and responses to what they were seeing and experiencing. In a time when talk shows clog the airways and tell-all memoirs top the best-seller lists, it can be hard to relate to an age when full disclosure was not valued as highly as discretion. Yet this reality is evident in reading the journals and letters left by the three men, which tend to be fact-oriented, long on descriptions of buildings and travel times and short on reflection.

In a way this is a mixed blessing. On one hand, it would be wonderful to be able to know about everything from the interpersonal dynamics between the three to what they

missed most about home. On the other hand, the lack of such confessional or revelatory records leave enough questions unanswered to let the reader or observer search out his or her own answers to the questions, and the story becomes more personal and meaningful. Regardless of how one raises and answers these questions, it is difficult not to admire the serious-minded and resolute way the three young men went about their work.

While Kratz's name may not be as familiar to Mennonites today as H.S. Bender or Orie O. Miller, and many Goshen College students live in the dormitory bearing his name without knowing anything about him, Kratz is not in danger of disappearing into oblivion quite yet. The Clayton Kratz Fellowship in eastern Pennsylvania, a student dormitory on the campus of Goshen College, a work of fiction by Geraldine Gross Harder, a video by John Ruth, and an active oral history all ensure that Kratz's story will be told, retold and remembered.

Yet there is a danger in letting history and stories, especially important ones, grow too familiar. The beauty and complexity of that which is closest and most familiar is often easiest to overlook. The Kratz story is certainly engaging on an immediate level, but it is also a more complicated story than it is often given credit

The *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* is published quarterly by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Church Historical Association.

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Russian famine refugees from Orenburg

Photo credit: MCC Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church.

for. One of the great pleasures of working on the video was exploring the many facets of the story. Peeling away one layer revealed another, which upon inspection changed the way we viewed previous layers, and so forth.

Everyone wonders what happened to Kratz. But there are other telling questions that also need to be considered, questions that inject a very human element into the story. How did Kratz's relationship with his brother Jacob, who enrolled in the military during World War I, affect his decision to go to Russia? What did Istanbul look like through the eyes of a 24-year-old Mennonite from Bucks County, Pennsylvania? How did Kratz feel while crossing the Black Sea on the American destroyer Whipple, ducking beneath the massive guns on deck and sharing sleeping quarters with officers? How did he occupy his time during his final days in Halbstadt?

History is not recorded in a vacuum, and stories are not passed to successive generations without undergoing processes of transformation and adaptation. They must be reborn and retold if they are to survive. Particularly in regards to a faith tradition that has valued martyrdom and suffering, our generation of

Mennonites is at a sort of crossroads in interpreting that history. Postmodernism has certainly found a secure toehold in the current generation of Mennonite students, and the postmodern lens is not a particularly kind judge towards the value of martyrdom. What is martyrdom other than the willingness to lay down one's life out of a belief in an absolute Truth? Is it possible to celebrate and affirm the value of such a decision without holding the exact beliefs? Is a complete adjustment of the definition of martyrdom necessary?

These questions and an intense desire to secure a more complete and human understanding of the story formed much of the impetus that caused the four of us to take a trip across the ocean, seeking out and following the trail of the group of young men. But no matter how personally enthused and engaged the four of us were with the subject matter, we still had to face the questions of why in the summer of 2000 a new video based on the life and travels of Clayton Kratz was needed, and why we were a group capable of producing it.

On an immediate level, the recent surfacing of the diary of C.E. Krehbiel merits a new look at the

Kratz story. Krehbiel was an MCC worker in Russia in 1922-23 who made inquiries into Kratz's disappearance during his tenure there. Other MCC workers, perhaps most notably A.J. Miller, also did some investigating and made appeals to the Russian government for any information on Kratz, but their efforts brought no answers to the persisting questions and speculation.

In fact, subsequent efforts by MCC workers and officials to determine Kratz's fate were so fruitless that speculation as to the disposition of Kratz's case ranged from him being executed to dying of typhus, to working in coal mines in eastern Russia. One Russian official even claimed that Kratz had been placed on a train for Norway, where he would be released from Russian custody.

After 80 years of virtually no information or discoveries, the Krehbiel diary offers answers. It provides a cause of death, means of execution, charges leveled against Kratz, a villain and a motive – even a numbered document that, if it did exist, in all likelihood still does exist, suffocating somewhere beneath eighty years of Soviet bureaucracy.

August 15, 1922

"Today a Mrs. Dyck called this afternoon and said she knew the man who [killed] Kratz. His alias at present is Grigori Saposhnikov. He has lived in her house for 11 months and wants to go to the U.S. He runs an electric plant. He is a Jew and has a wife and no children. He is supposed to be a bad man in general."

December 24, 1922

"Johann Wall made inquiry at Kharkow on Clayton Kratz and 'through a Jew he knows from Lodz found that records of Kharkow 3853a state that Kratz was arrested at Halbstadt by Bagon, etc...the latter having accused him or charged with being an English spy of the govern-

ment and that he was then brought to Bachmut, etc., and finally to Kharkow where he was turned over to the Gubernia at Alexandrowsk and the records says shot there!"

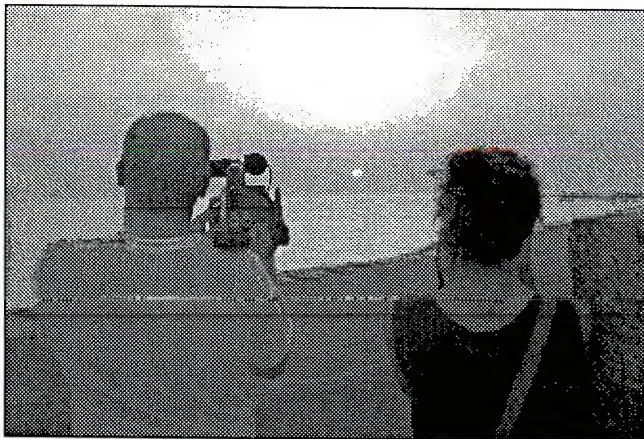
Promising, yes. Tantalizing, certainly. But at the same time, the Krehbiel diary essentially boils down to a collection of hearsay. Krehbiel himself did not see document 3538a in Kharkow and did not talk to Grigori Saposhnikov. Yet however reliable or unreliable Krehbiel's sources may have been, and even if his reports are accepted at face value, new questions arise to take the place of the old.

With so many people back home starving for any piece of news, the question of why Krehbiel kept his findings secret is a mystery nearly as engaging as Kratz's disappearance. It is tempting to speculate. Perhaps he dreaded the thought of shattering any remaining hopes in the Kratz family or his fiancé, Edith Miller. Perhaps he realized the secondhand nature of the information and did not want to assume personal responsibility for it or its consequences. Perhaps Krehbiel viewed the reference to Saposhnikov, a Jew, as information too inflammatory to disseminate.

But to become too consumed with the details and tantalizing fragments of the diary is to miss the point. As exciting as the Krehbiel diary is, to one inclined to believe everything in it, there are no seismic changes to what had already been assume; and to a skeptic, it only raises more questions than it answers. So while the Krehbiel diary is certainly a significant development and was perhaps for our group somewhat of a catalyst for making the video, it is still only a part of the total picture.

When the idea of making a video about Kratz was still more idea than reality, we talked to Professor John

D. Roth. He was both encouraging and supportive of our idea and enthusiasm, but was sure to articulate some of the challenges ahead. For instance, the fact that John Ruth had already made a video about Kratz would raise questions of pertinence in the minds of many viewers and supporters.



Peter Eash Scott and Katherine Lemon film the view across the Black Sea during their search for the illusive Clayton Kratz story. Photo credit: Tim Kennel.

Roth also advised us to prepare ourselves to answer the question of what authority we had to present this story. This question certainly tempered our enthusiasm, but as we resolved to go forward with the project, we found that the answer lay in the story itself.

Both Miller and Slagel were still in their twenties at the time of the trip, and Kratz was twenty-four, with another year of school ahead of him. It is hard to overstate the importance and risk of their work. They were granted leadership in the groundbreaking steps of forging Mennonite Central Committee, with a task of organizing and delivering tons of relief supplies into the interior of a war-ravaged country, charting unfamiliar territory and navigating through nightmarish bureaucracies. These would be formidable tasks now, let alone in 1920.

It is difficult to imagine that if the church were selecting a team of three to fill a role of such importance today, a team of twenty-somethings would be selected for the job. It is easy to get trapped in circular logic

answering the question of whether or not that has more to do with the church or the young people of today. But the bottom line is that leadership positions in the church and church-affiliated organizations for young people simply are not there to the extent they were in 1920, or even in 1960. Seeing the example of these three young men shouldering such responsibility and delivering under great pressures and stresses is an inspiring example of the potential impact that young people can have on the church.

While the elements of mystery, intrigue, and war make the story gripping, it is the faith, dedication, courage, and unfaltering belief in the justness of their cause that pierces the layers of history shrouding the story, bringing it very

much to life for four young people on the brink of making life-changing choices. While we may differ in our perceptions of the story and what we take away from it, one thing all four of us feel strongly about and see manifest in this story is that young people of the church have a voice and can be capable producers and leaders when given the opportunity and supported through it.

The story of Clayton Kratz is still touching lives and compelling people to action. We hope that this video will, at least in a small way, continue this process.

— Sidney King graduated from Goshen College in May 2000 with a double major in German and music and plans to attend graduate school in the fall. He is from Hickory, North Carolina.

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Muenster 465 Years Later



The artist Adolph W. Knuppel (left) conversing with a city archivist Rolf Klotzer under another of Knuppel's memorial art. Photo credit: John A. Lapp.

By John A. Lapp

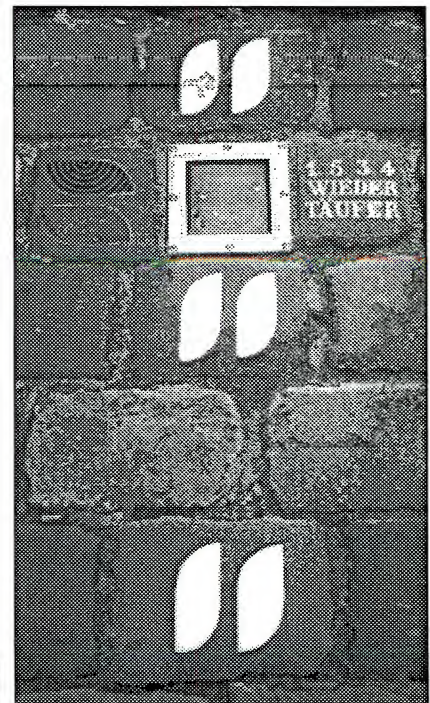
On the United States election day, November 7, 2000, Alice and I were privileged to have a guided tour of this famous city of the Anabaptist past. Stefan and Sylvia van Delden of nearby Gronau organized and hosted our tour. In 1534-35 some radical Wiedertaufer took over the city from the Catholic Prince-bishop Franz von Waldeck. Now the city museum has a fine exhibit entitled "The Kingdom of the Anabaptists" which opened September 17 and will continue until March 4, 2001.

The exhibit includes several large works of art and a few manuscripts from some of the principal players in this sixteenth-century drama. There are portraits, some from the sixteenth century. The most important portrait is the 1535 drawing of Jan van Leiden drawn by Heinrich Aldegrever, which is on loan from the British Museum in London. There are artifacts from the time representing the Anabaptist cause and the militant response. Our

guide, a University of Muenster history student, emphasized getting past the extensive mythology that surrounds this event in order to understand the lasting and widespread effect of their (Anabaptists') rule within Europe and up to the present day. The Anabaptist protest focused attention, she said, on the principle that then governed Europe, the eagle over the crucifix. Her interpretation of this event began with agitation for church reform beginning in 1525 by the poor and the working classes and the role of influential business leaders alongside the religious reformers. The exhibit notes the story of exile, torture, and martyrdom including replicas of the infamous cages still hanging from St. Lambert's Church tower, which held the corpses of three revolutionary leaders.

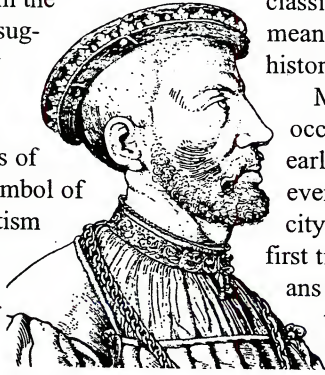
While there are few references to Mennonites in the exhibit, the fact that most Anabaptists were peaceful is noted. Historians point out how the pacifism of Menno Simons and his colleagues was in part a response to the bitterness of the Muenster tragedy.

On September 27, ten days after the opening of the exhibit, the city of Muenster dedicated a piece of street sculpture entitled "Wasser in Muenster" by a city artist, Adolph W. Knuppel. Knuppel's earlier sculpture highlighted the Peace of Westphalia signed in the statehouse in Muenster in 1648 which ended the thirty-year war of religion in central and western Europe. Now Knuppel designed a relief sculpture embedded in the brick pavement of the main Market Street. These sculptures are located in front of what is believed to have been the residence of Bernard Knipperdollink, a business leader and later mayor who supported the Muenster Anabaptists. City historians surmise that the first public believer's baptism took place on this street. The simple structure is a glass cylinder that holds water from an old Muenster well and from the River Jordan. The water of holy baptism mixed with the water of this particular place symbolizing that the Gospel and Anabaptism are not



"Wasser in Muenster" street sculpture. Photo credit: John A. Lapp.

outside history but integral to the life of Muenster, Westphalia, Germany, Europe, the world. Knuppel told us the sculpture is in the form of a cross suggesting that new life and pain go together. Water, also in the words of the artist, is a symbol of change. Anabaptism was a challenge to the established pattern of religion and politics. The words "1534 Wieder Taufen" are painted on the street. The



Jan Van Leiden, the revolutionary "king of the New Zion."

Photo credit: from The Reformation by Hillebrand.

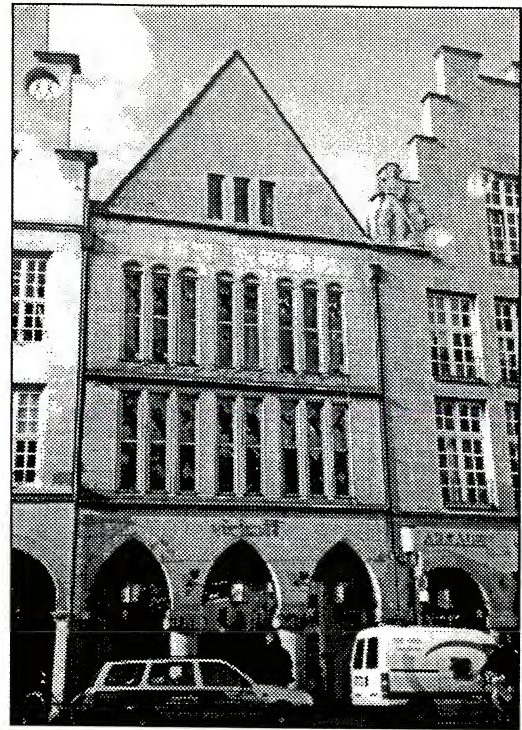
dove of peace connects "Wasser" in Muenster to the artist's other work recalling the Peace of Westphalia.

On September 27 when this sculpture was unveiled, the water was poured into the container by the Catholic bishop, the lead Protestant

pastor, a Baptist pastor, the mayor, and the head of the chamber of commerce — a classic illustration of art as a means of healing the stain of history.

Muenster has on several occasions as recently as the early 1980's recognized the events of 1534-35 in their city history. This may be the first time the city, its historians and leaders have seen the positive impact of Muenster Anabaptism. The passage of time, changing circumstances, and imaginative artists help us see the past in fresh ways.

— *John A. Lapp is Executive Secretary Emeritus of Mennonite Central Committee and is currently the coordinator of the Global Mennonite History Project for Mennonite World Conference.*



Market Street, Muenster, where house of Bernard Knipperdolk once stood.

Photo credit: John A. Lapp.

Mennonite Mirth

By Jep Hostetler

For those in the Mennonite tradition who have Pennsylvania German roots, there are many stories that carry humor to our hearts. Unfortunately, some of the stories cannot be translated into English with any equal measure of humor. There are stories, however, that circulate, grow in magnitude, and are amusing to select groups of people from varying Mennonite traditions.

Stories comparing the various kinds of Mennonites are funny only if one understands the differences between them. Ethnic jokes are funny only if you understand the culture from which they arise. So it is with Mennonite stories. Some are

Mennonite-specific and others are simply applied to Mennonites. Then there are riddles and quandaries such as the following.

Q. How many Mennonites does it take to change a light bulb?

A. What? Change!

Q. What's the shortest book in the world?

A. Mennonite War Heroes.

Q. Why do Mennonites refuse to wear short-sleeved shirts?

A. They are not allowed to bare arms.

Q. What is the difference between a Mennonite and a canoe?

A. A canoe tips easily.

Stories abound from our history. J.C. Wenger, theologian, storyteller, teacher and scholar, was noted for his sense of humor and the way he could weave a good story into his teaching. I remember looking forward to each of his classes on Christian ethics at Goshen College. It was said that even in his later years he had a sense of humor in the way he invited his visitors to leave. When he would tire of the visit he would simply ask his guests, "Would you like for me to have a word of prayer with you before you go?"

H.S. Bender, a well-known patriarch of the Mennonite church, was the person involved in the following story. My wife Joyce and I courted throughout our four years at Goshen College. To say the least, we were



Dean Harold S. Bender kept watch over his flock by night.

nearly inseparable. What was important was to find places that were secluded enough to steal a good-night kiss or two. On one autumn evening we found ourselves out behind the Goshen seminary (which was later merged into the AMBS group) building. We had found a little entryway where we could get away from the chilly evening. Just as we were saying good night, in our dark corner, we heard footsteps. It was H.S. Bender returning to his office, late, to retrieve some of his papers. "H'm ph," he said. "It sure is a nice evening, isn't it?" "Yes," I blurted out, "we think so too" as we moved quickly to escape his stern gaze.

A.J. Metzler, preacher, evangelist and publisher, was familiar to many in his generation in the Mennonite Church. He was an excellent preacher and a gifted teacher. He often spent weekends giving messages and holding evangelistic meetings. His father had these speaking abilities as well, only more so. Abram Metzler, A.J.'s father, was known to get quite enthused about his messages, and he could speak quite loudly and vociferously. A.J. related the following story about his father. At an evening serv-

ice, during his enthusiastic and energetic preaching, he had to sneeze. Those who knew A.J. or any of his children, know that they have a rather explosive, noisy sneeze. (I think it is genetic.) So was the case with the elder Abram. When he sneezed, his false teeth flew out of his mouth and were headed for the floor directly in front of him. Deft of wit and quick of hand, he caught the false teeth in midair, stuffed them quickly back into his mouth, and continued preaching as though nothing had ever happened. Not even a subdued "Amen" from the amen corner could slow him down. He did comment later regarding what folks would remember about the evening. "Unfortunately," he said, "you will most likely remember the teeth and forget the message."

Then there was a young Amish lad who had a hankering for two fair Amish maidens. As his interest in each of them grew with equal intensity, he decided he needed divine intervention. So, on his way home from a frolic one evening, he decided to allow God to steer his horse correctly. At the fork in the road he simply said, "If Baalam's ass could speak, my horse can choose which young lady I should continue to see." He released the reins and waited to see which fork in the road the horse would select. If he goes to the left it will be Jonas' Sadie, if he turns to the right it will be Eli's Anna. The horse chose neither and charged right straight ahead into the open field. "Honestly," he pleaded, "I was asking for help from God, not from Paul." It turns out that he married neither Sadie nor Anna.

— *Jep Hostetler, Ph.D., Columbus, Ohio, is a humor consultant and author. He is an associate professor emeritus at the Ohio State University College of Medicine. He and his wife Joyce serve as the staff persons for the Mennonite Medical Association.*

New Treasures: Archives of the Mennonite Church

By Dennis Stoesz, Archivist

What follows is a sampling of personal papers and organizational records that have come into the archives during the past year. They are listed alphabetically by the name of the collection.

Clemens, Lois (Gunden), 1915- , Lansdale, Pennsylvania. Personal papers, 1883-1996, including correspondence, scrapbooks, photographs, and artifacts. Lois Gunden received a BA from Goshen College in 1932, and went on to obtain a MA from George Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee, and a Ph.D. from Indiana University. She served as Professor of French and Spanish at Goshen College, 1939-1962, and then as part-time professor at Temple University. Throughout this time she also served in voluntary service at a number of different places. From 1941-44, she served as the directress of a refugee children's home in southern France under Mennonite Central Committee. She was held as a civilian prisoner of war in Germany from January 1943-March 1944. She then served as leader of two summer units at Ypsilanti State Hospital, Michigan, in 1944 and 1945. Later she served in Puerto Rico and Mexico. She was

married to Ernest R. Clemens in 1958. In 1970, she presented the Conrad Grebel Lectures on the role of women in the church, which was published as a book *Women Liberated*. She made an Educator's visit to Africa in 1982. 15 linear feet. Donor: Pauline (Clemens) and John Fisher, Goshen, Indiana.

Conrad, Orie M. (Orie Martin), 1896-1982,

Tangent, Oregon. Photograph album, 1918-19, depicting Conrad's time as a conscientious objector at Camp Lewis, Washington, during World War I, and his attendance at Hesston College. Included is a long panoramic photograph of army personnel and CO's at Camp Lewis taken on November 18, 1918. Conrad was baptized into the Methodist church as a boy, and when he was drafted he was placed in the regular army at Camp Lewis, Washington. He took a stand as a conscientious objector, and refused to train and put on a uniform. He paid dearly for it, and at one point nearly lost his life by hanging. An officer saved him and his tormentors were court-martialed. After the war he attended Hesston College for a short term, and returned to Oregon, where he joined the Mennonite Church, married Eda Zehr in 1920, and raised eight children. Collection also includes a slide set (86 slides) from the time Conrad helped rebuild homes in Haiti, under Mennonite Central Committee / Mennonite Disaster Service, after the devastating hurricane Inez hit Haiti in 1967. 3.3 linear inches. Donor: Verna



Orie M. Conrad taking his stand as a conscientious objector among fellow CO's and regular army personnel at Camp Lewis, Washington, in 1918. He refused to train and refused to put on a uniform. He paid dearly for it: at one point he almost lost his life by hanging but an officer saved him and his tormentors were court court-martialed. (Front row, l-r): Unidentified men. (Middle row, l-r): Homer Schlegel, Albany, Oregon (third from left), Orie M. Conrad, Troutdale, Oregon (far right). (Back row): Sheik with turban (second from left), John Kropf, from Harrisburg, Oregon (sixth from left), and Elmer McTimmonds, Sheridan, Oregon (seventh from left).

Source: Orie M. Conrad Photograph Collection

(Conrad) Birky, a daughter, and Luke Birky, Goshen, Indiana.

First Mennonite Church, 1904- , Fort Wayne, Indiana. White enamel basin, used at least from 1930's - 1980's, for washing feet. The foot washing part of the service was usually done after the communion service, which was held twice a year. Foot washing was discontinued in the church in the early 1980's according to the recollections of the donor, who

saved the basin, and who was a member of this church from about 1938-1985. Pastors who served this church through the years included B. B. King, Lloy Kniss, Newton Weber, Allen Ebersole, Rudy Borntrager, John R. Smucker, John King, Howard Dunlap, Mark Vincent, and John Leichty. The church was formerly known as the Fort Wayne Mission. 1 Artifact (Oversize). Donor: Trennis Yoder, Goshen, Indiana.



Lois Gunden handing out powdered milk packets to refugee boys at Banyuls, France, in 1942. Adults (l-r): Unidentified man, Mr. Coma, J. N. Byler and Lois Gunden. The photograph was taken in the courtyard at Secours Mennonite aux Enfants [Mennonite Relief for Children] which also acted as a relief distribution center for adults, and a boy's school, at Banyuls, France. Source: Lois (Gunden) Clemens Collection.

Hesston College, 1909- , Hesston, Kansas. Photographs, 1911-23, of the faculty and students at Hesston Academy and College. Included are formal group shots, 1911-12, 1914, 1918-19, 1921, 1922-23, 1922 (Academy) and 1923 (Academy). The photographs come via a daughter of Paul and Alta Mae (Eby) Erb. Paul was president of the 1914 class, and Alta Mae was the advisor. Paul Erb also taught at Hesston College from 1913-1941. The collection also includes two informal shots, one showing students in the 1910's (including Alta Mae Eby), and one of a 1914 Class reunion. 6 linear inches (photographs fit into one oversize box, 15" x 22" x 2"). Donor: Winifred (Erb) Paul, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania



George R. and Lawrence Brunk Evangelistic Crusade, held in early 1950's on the Amos Yontz farm on State Road 33, three miles southeast of Goshen, Indiana. Seated in the third row from the front, just right of the speaker, is (l-r): Evelyn (Hostetler) Kauffman with her two daughters on either side, Mary Anne (on left) and Pat (on right); and seated next to them are Vivian (Johns) and Ezra Schlabach. "We attended these two week tent meetings faithfully, with a three year old and a three month old," reflects John [and Doris] E. Nunemaker. Source: Theron F. Schlabach Photograph Collection

Hostetler Miller, Lizzie (Eash), 1875-1959, Shipshewana, Indiana. Personal papers, 1912-1952, including a financial ledger book used in the store, 1912 (including some scrapbook items, 1943-53); another scrapbook, 1923-1930's and 1947; a financial ledger book, 1924-37; diaries, 1936-52; and two memo books, 1941-47. Scrapbooks contain obituaries, poems and articles cut out of magazines. Lizzie Eash was born and grew up in Lagrange County and was first married to Noah J. Hostetler in 1893, who had a general store and livery stable in



Staff of the Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, in 1937.

(Front row, on ground, l-r): George Smoker, Lester Hershey, Henry Hernley, Marshall Maust, Orie Cutrell, Melvin Hernley, Ralph Bender, Homer Kauffman, George Loucks, Irvin Brunk, Grandpa [Jonas B.] Hernley, Levi Hartzler, Henry Landis, and Walter Loucks. (Seated, l-r): Ben Gamber, John Horsch, Ellrose Zook, Edward Yoder, Charles Shoemaker, Abram Metzler, Daniel Kauffman, John Horst, Clayton Yake, George Cutrell, David Alderfer. (Standing, l-r): Mary Schlood, Florence Loucks, Ella Esbenshade, Martha Mumaw, Thelma Gilnett, Beulah, Loucks, Ruth Brunk, Anna Mumaw, Katherine Blyston, Anna Stull, Vivian Baer, Mae Loucks, Naomi Smoker, Minnie Stull, Nancy Hernley, Naomi Daugherty, and Mary Lillian Hernley.

Source: Mennonite Publishing House Photograph Collection, photograph courtesy of Fern (Hernley) Savanick.

Shipshewana. They had five children, including Goldie May, S. Jay (missionary to Ghana, West Africa), Jonathan J., Wilbur and Lloyd N. After Hostetler's death in 1933, she married Josiah J. Miller in 1940. "She was a lifelong member of the Forks and Shore churches, where she was always willing to perform any service assigned to her. She prayed much for Christian missions in other states and foreign countries also." [from the obituary] 5 linear inches. Donor: J. J. Hostetler, Goshen, Indiana.

Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, 1917- , Audiovisuals, Goshen, Indiana. Five slide sets, 1973-1982, including scripts and taped recordings produced by the Conference. They include *United in Mission, 1973, Our Conference at Work, 1975, Church Buildings and Pastors, Past and Present, 1970's, The Church Together, 1982, and Mission Commission Slide Set, 1982.* John R. Smucker was involved in producing

the first three sets, and as Conference Historian continued to update the slide set of the pastors and church buildings of the conference. Included with this deposit of audiovisuals are also taped recordings of the 1967 Indiana-Michigan conference held at North Leo Mennonite Church, and slides of the various Commissions of the Conference, 1970-72. 5 linear feet. Donor: Charlotte Long, Administrative Assistant, and John R. Smucker, Goshen, Indiana.

Mennonite Publishing House, 1908- , Foundation Series for Youth and Adults, 1977-83, Scottdale, Pennsylvania. Minutes, correspondence and writer outlines, 1977-83, as collected by Helmut Harder when he served as Executive Director of the Foundation Series Sunday School Curriculum for Youth and Adults. This was a joint publishing project of the Brethren in Christ Church (Pennsylvania), General Conference Mennonite Church (Kansas), Mennonite Church

(Pennsylvania), and the Church of the Brethren (Illinois), with the Mennonite Brethren (California) being a cooperative user. 10 linear inches. Donor: Helmut Harder, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale, Inc., 1968- , Goshen, Indiana.

Records, 1968-96, including mostly treasurer reports, bills and receipts, having to do with the organization of the sale. Records also contain annual reports, annual programs for the board of directors, correspondence, minutes, agreements, mailing lists, posters, newspaper clippings and publicity photographs. These records were passed down through the years from one treasurer to the next treasurer. 13.75 linear feet. Donor: Rex Hochstedler, Treasurer, Goshen, Indiana.

Mission Interests Committee of the Amish Mennonite Church, 1952-61, Goshen, Indiana. Correspondence and articles, dating from 1956-61, which went into the publication of *Witnessing, 1953-61.* Some of the persons involved in publishing it were Harvey Graber, of Goshen, Indiana, and later of Red Lake, Ontario, who served as editor from 1953-59; Yost H. Miller, Millersburg, Ohio, who served as associate editor, 1958-59, and later as editor, 1959-61; Homer Nissley, Goshen, Indiana, who served as subscription manager, and later as Associate Editor, 1959-61; Mahlon Wagler, Partridge, Kansas, who served as secretary-treasurer; and Noah Nisly, Hutchinson, Kansas, who served for a time as subscription manager. The first chair of this committee was Andrew A. Miller, Millersburg, Ohio. 5 linear inches. Donor: Homer Nissley, South Bend, Indiana, via Steve Nolt, Goshen College.

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The Back Page

by John E. Sharp

Sidney King's article in this issue is one of 28 stories in a forthcoming book, *Gathering at the Hearth: Stories Mennonites Tell*. This collection of stories is sponsored by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church and published by Herald Press. The stories in this volume have been selected because they reveal something about who we are — or who we want to be as Mennonites. They are stories we should remember, tell and retell. The Historical Committee hopes this collection will make a contribution to the current Integration/Transformation Process, believing that learning each other's stories is essential if we are to work and worship together. The stories are as follows:

Amish or Cheyenne? The Hochstetters of Northkill by John E. Sharp
A Cheyenne Legacy at the Washita River by Lawrence Hart
Keeping House as We Understand It by John L. Ruth

Escaping the Confederacy by John E. Sharp

David Goerz: Russian Mennonite Pioneer by D.C. Wedel

Father Stuckey and the Central Conference by John E. Sharp

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The Bishops and the Nightingale by Alice W. Lapp

A Soft Voice Saves the Day . . . and the Church by Edward Yoder

Escape from Communism by Johann D. Rempel

A Mennonite Imposter by Peter J. Dyck

French Fries and World Missions by

John M. Bender and Peter Dyck

Doing Good in Time of War by Grant M. Stoltzfus

Presenting the Anabaptist Vision by Albert N. Keim

Revive Us Again: Brunk Brothers Tent Revivals by Ford Berg

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Come Sunday, Will We Be a True Communion? by James Samuel Logan

A Wanderer Comes Home by Beryl Forrester

The Threshold Is High by Anne Stuckey

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Samuel's Story by Richard Showalter

Drinking Anabaptist Tea and Other Tales of Integration by Peter Dyck

In the Footsteps of Clayton Kratz by Sidney King

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MIENNONITE

Historical Bulletin

Vol. LXII

April 2001

ISSN 0025-9357

No. 2

A Cheyenne Legacy at the Washita River

By Lawrence H. Hart

The cultural clash between European Americans and Native Americans on the Great Plains became severe during the 1860s and 1870s. Homesteading pioneers—Mennonites among them—increased the pressure on Native Americans to vacate their ancestral lands. Little did European American Mennonites realize that they shared a deeply held conviction with some Native Americans: nonresistance to violence. Lawrence H. Hart, a former bomber pilot, embodies this conviction from both traditions: he is a Mennonite pastor and a Cheyenne peace chief. In this story Hart revisits a painful, violent event in his history and becomes an agent of reconciliation.

“O DAI! (LISTEN),” a Cheyenne woman whispered in the early morning of November 27, 1868. The noises she heard struck fear to her heart. Four years before, she had survived a terrible massacre at Sand Creek in eastern Colorado. Her fear was especially heightened the evening before when Cheyenne Peace Chief Black Kettle—traveling with warriors Little Robe and Spotted Wolf and Arapaho Chief Big



Slaughter to the tune of “Garry Owen”: the infamous massacre of Black Kettle’s peaceful village by U.S. troops led by George Armstrong Custer, November 27, 1868. (Credit: Library of Congress)

Mouth—returned from his visit with Colonel William H. Hazen at Fort Cobb. They had gone seeking an assurance of peace and safety.

Surely the colonel would honor Black Kettle’s peaceful cooperation. Had the chief not received a peace medal from the hand of Abraham Lincoln, president of the United States? Was he not flying the American flag given him in the nation’s capital as a symbol of his peaceful intentions, as well as a white flag of peace? Had he not signed the treaties of 1865 and 1867? Had he not survived the terrible Sand Creek massacre without making any resistance?

Colonel Hazen refused to give them the protection they sought. He told them that the federal government had initiated a winter campaign to punish them for attacks against Kansas settlers. When the chiefs returned to their respective winter camps with the bad news, everyone was alarmed.

Cheyenne men discussed the impending campaign in Black Kettle’s lodge. His wife, Medicine Woman Later, was listening. She had survived nine bullet wounds at Sand Creek and wanted the camp moved immediately, but it was midnight and very cold. The men decided to stay one more night by the banks of the

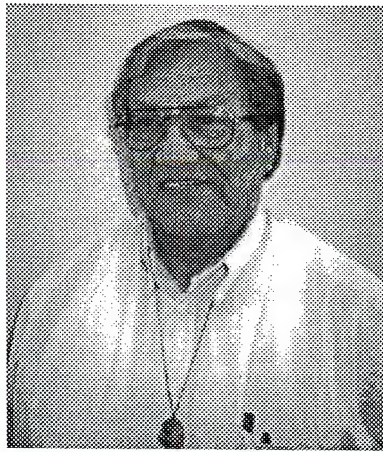
Hooxeeohe, the Cheyenne name for the Washita River in Indian Territory, later to become the state of Oklahoma.

As it turned out, Medicine Woman Later's intuition was

right. The unsettling noises she heard that night came from eight hundred approaching troops. Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer led the Seventh U.S. Cavalry to within striking distance, arriving at midnight. At dawn on November 27, with a foot of snow on the ground, the regimental band of the Seventh Cavalry played their marching song, "Garry Owen," signaling the attack.

Terror struck the Cheyenne. The sword-wielding Custer, who himself would one day die by the sword, ordered the attack from

four sides. The troops charged through the cluster of fifty-one lodges, shooting right and left. Hearing the noise of the weapons and the screams, Arapaho and Cheyenne warriors from nearby villages came running. Eventually,



Lawrence Hart: *Blending the peace traditions of Native Americans and of Mennonites.* (Credit: John E. Sharp)

Kiowa, Comanche, and Plains Apache warriors joined the fight.

Twenty-two soldiers were killed and thirteen wounded. Custer's troops captured fifty-three Cheyenne Indians, mostly women. They torched Black Kettle's village, including the winter supply of

food and clothing, and slaughtered over eight hundred Cheyenne horses. Black Kettle and Medicine Woman Later tried to escape, but they were shot off their horse and fell into the Washita River.

Lieutenant Colonel Custer report-

ed to his superior officer: "After a desperate conflict of several hours, our efforts were crowned with the most complete and gratifying success."¹ He claimed to have killed 108 warriors, when in fact most of the victims were women and children.

Furthermore, he was pleased that Black Kettle's scalp was in the possession of one of his Osage guides.²

Chief Black Kettle did what weaker men could not do; he refused to fight violence with violence. He had been taught the words of Cheyenne prophet, Sweet Medicine:

If you see your mother, wife, or children being molested or harmed by anyone, you do not go and seek revenge. Take your pipe. Go, sit and smoke and do nothing, for you are now a Cheyenne chief.

One hundred years later, the town of Cheyenne, Oklahoma, planned a centennial commemoration of the massacre, now called "the last great battle between the Indians

The *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* is published quarterly by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Church Historical Association.

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Dues for subscription-membership in the Mennonite Church Historical Association (\$25 annual), inquiries, articles, or news items should be sent to the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, 1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526. Telephone (219) 535-7477, FAX (219) 535-7756, E-mail: johnes@goshen.edu, URL: www.goshen.edu/mcarchives/

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and the U.S. Army in Oklahoma.”³ The organizers asked the native Cheyenne to participate in a reenactment. But how could they celebrate the brutal attack on their peaceful village? Finally, the Cheyenne reluctantly agreed on condition that they be permitted to bury the remains of a Cheyenne child on display in the local museum.

The reenactment began. Local townsfolk and ranchers played the soldiers of the Seventh Cavalry. In a mock village of tepees, Cheyenne adults and children portrayed their ancestors. Unknown to the Cheyenne, however, a California group called the Grandsons of the Seventh Cavalry, Grand Army of the Republic, had been asked to join the reenactment.

This group was dressed in authentic Seventh Cavalry uniforms. Marching to the tune “Garry Owen,” they rushed the village, shooting blank cartridges from authentic Spencer carbines. For many Cheyenne people watching, especially those whose children were in the mock village, the events became all too real. Deep feelings of hostility erupted.

Nevertheless, the day’s schedule continued. The final event was the re-burial of a victim’s remains on the grounds of the Black Kettle Museum. As the chiefs, including peace chief and Mennonite pastor Lawrence Hart, left the museum carrying a small, custom-made bronze coffin, they began chanting their special burial songs. Snow was falling as it had fallen a hundred years before.


Over their singing, the chiefs suddenly heard the command, “Present arms!” The Grandsons of the Seventh Cavalry were there. Emotions flared. *How dare they salute someone their grandfathers killed?* thought Hart. In the midst of the charged atmosphere, a Cheyenne woman, Lucille Young Bull, took off her beautiful new woolen blanket and quickly draped it over the coffin as the procession went by. As tradition dictated, the blanket would later be given as an honored gift.

After the burial the older and wiser peace chiefs huddled momentarily. Lawrence Hart speculated that the blanket would be presented to one of the Oklahoma dignitaries in the audience. But the older chiefs had a different plan. They asked Hart to give the ceremonial blanket to the captain of the Grandsons of the Seventh Cavalry! How could Hart do this? This man was the enemy! Hart’s own great-grandfather, Afraid of Beavers, had barely escaped the attack by hiding in a snowdrift. Hart’s nerves and muscles tensed.

In sharp military fashion, the captain came forward, stopped in front of the peace chiefs, and drew his saber to salute. Hart, the young peace chief, instructed the captain to turn around. Returning his saber sharply, he did an about-face. Hart’s trembling hands draped the beautiful blanket over the captain’s shoulders.

It was an awesome moment. The wise Cheyenne peace chiefs had initiated a reconciliation that resulted in conflict transforma-

tion. At this ceremony, the older peace chiefs indelibly impressed onto the younger chief what it meant to follow the instructions of Sweet Medicine, a prophet of the Cheyenne. To end the ceremony of re-burial, the Grandsons fired volleys to honor the victim. There was not a dry eye in the audience.

The Grandsons followed the chiefs back to the museum. Then and there, they embraced. Some cried. Some apologized. When Hart greeted the captain of the regiment, the officer took the “Garry Owen” pin from his own uniform and handed it to Hart. “Accept this on behalf of all Cheyenne Indian people,” the captain said. “Never again will your people hear ‘Garry Owen.’”⁴ 

— Lawrence Hart is a Mennonite pastor and Executive Director of the Cheyenne Cultural Center, Clinton, Oklahoma.

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Notes

¹ “Battle of the Washita,” General [sic] Custer to General Sheridan, Headquarters, Seventh U.S. Cavalry, In the Field of the Washita River, 28 November 1868. Published in *The New York Times*, 30 November 1868 (www.hillsdale.edu/dept/history/documents/war/AmericanIndian/1868-Washita-custer.htm).

² Ibid.

³ Oklahoma state official website: <http://www.state.ok.us/osfdocs/stinfo2.html#NATIVEPEOPLE>

⁴ A version of this story was originally published as “Legacies of the Massacre and Battle at the Washita,” by Lawrence H. Hart, *Oklahoma Today*, May/June, 1999, 58-63.

The Mystery of the Plockhoy Settlement in the Valley of Swans

By Bart Plantenga

"If we be insufferable to the World and they be incorrigible, or unbettable, as to us, then let us reduce our friendship and society to a few in number ... that we might truly be distinguished from the Barbarous and Savage people..."

- Pieter Plockhoy

"While Plockhoy's plans failed, and in some details were utopian, he must, nevertheless, be considered as one of the heralds of that religious freedom which modern nations accept and cherish" - Irvin B. Horst, "Pieter Corneliszoon Plockhoy: An Apostle of the Collegiants"

It's August 1664, thirteen chaotic months after Pieter Corneliszoon Plockhoy and forty-one Dutch settlers established Zwaanendael [Valley of Swans] along the banks of Delaware Bay, near present-day Lewes, Delaware.

Although home to many swans, it is far too flat to host anything called a valley. Their efforts at creating an ideal community "distinguished from the barbarous and savage people" of typical societies had suffered its setbacks.

England was preparing to wrest control of New Netherland. The end is in sight. But what sort of end? If England's King Charles II,

no admirer of the Dutch, had his way, it would involve strife with some revenge thrown in. He vowed to crush the Dutch to "an entire obedience" if necessary. But James, Duke of York, pre-



The Zwaanendael Museum, Lewes, Delaware, reflects the Dutch influence of its earliest European settlers. Here Plockhoy pursued his dream for a utopian Christian community. (Copyright 2001 Jeannine Lahey, <http://wilmington.about.com>)

ferred a more diplomatically pragmatic resolution – if Dutch settlers declare allegiance to England they would be allowed to remain – as English subjects.

Charles gave his brother, James, the northern territories – today's

Northeastern states down to Delaware. Lands previously granted to the Plymouth Company, including Dutch settlements along the Delaware River—long an annoying wedge dividing English colonies – were offered to Charles Calvert, Lord Baltimore's son. This unconcealed land grab of this, in James' words, "sanctuary of discontent and mutiny," would give England dominion over "its" colonies once again – meanwhile ushering in the Second Anglo-Dutch War.

In late August 1664, four English men-of-war, under the command of Colonel Richard Nicholls had triumphantly, if anti-climactically, accepted the Dutch surrender of New Amsterdam. Nicholls then dispatched two ships and some soldiers under the command of Colonel Richard Carr to secure the surrender of Fort Casimir, just down river from present-day Wilmington, and the surrounding New Amstel region.

The outgunned Dutch, realizing that any show of resistance would be suicidal,

refused to abandon their homesteads to join any fight. Instead, they hoped for a peaceful surrender. The Articles of Surrender were rumored to include religious freedom, retention of land and language. But not everyone hoped for that. Alexander D'Hinoyossa,

the flamboyantly corruptible director of the New Amstel region of New Amsterdam and the ever-cantankerous Peter Stuyvesant in New Amsterdam, tried to stoke up passions for a last stand, but to no avail. D'Hinoyossa and some rag-tag followers retreated to Fort Casimir, just down river from present-day Wilmington, to mount a mostly ceremonial sputter of resistance – more vainglorious biography than patriotic effort.

Carr however, was in no mood to negotiate with a gaggle of reprobate resisters and demanded submission or be forced to an “entire obedience.” There was a half-hearted show of resistance and so Carr fired two broadsides into the fort, then took it by storm, killing three resisters and wounding ten. The British ransacked Casimir and took prisoners.

Carr, already infuriated by the resisters’ impertinence, was in no mood to accept any dignified surrender of the surrounding settlements. In a fit of arrogant pique, he pillaged the settlements even though settlers offered no resistance. He seized property, harvests, some 200 sheep, horses, and cows, destroyed a brewery, a sawmill and, it is said, sold the surviving soldiers and Dutch-owned slaves into slavery in Virginia. Most of the rest took oaths of allegiance to the English throne – it was either that or face the consequences. And Nieuw Amstel became New Castle.

Carr then sailed eighty miles southward to the sad excuse for a fort, Fort Sekonnessinck. This was taken with no resistance.

Further inland he found Zwaanendael, near Hoornkill [also spelled Hoornkil, Horekil and Whorekill]. On a humid September 4, the Zwaanendael sentry may have caught a glimmer off the sword of one of Carr’s soldiers. No one suspected the worst.

Carr’s regiment of wide-eyed, half-drunk, illiterate country boys in threadbare breeches, shabby boots, and makeshift redcoats stood stiff as a row of bowling pins a few hundred meters away across a field of golden corn, matchlock muskets drawn. Dread hung in the cumbrous air. What now?

Carr, with sword raised, marched his troops into Zwaanendael in close formation, plumes jiggling on their caps to the drummers’ fearsome beats. Perhaps further awkwardness ensued as the settlers refused to resist. Carr ordered the settlement’s total destruction. Troops plundered provisions and livestock, demolished the colony, leaving only traces of smoldering rubble – ashes to ashes, dust to dust – departing with spoils in tow. Some historians maintain that several settlers were slain, others driven into the wilderness and, as Stuyvesant notes in his diaries they had “demanded good treatment, which however they did not obtain, they wer[e] invaded, stripped bare, plundered, and many of them sold into slavery in Virginia.” Rumors arose that some stragglers even found their way back to Holland. Others remained to farm the region as English subjects.

Some believe Carr took it out doubly on Plockhoy’s people because they were viewed as enemies of the crown, associated with the hated Levelers and various utopians Plockhoy had befriended during his London days. In Carr’s eyes, a bunch of weirdoes and seditious heretics, and his mission to root them out was merely extending policies already enacted in England. To this end he followed orders beyond any call of duty.

New Amstel’s Sheriff Van Sweringen noted at the time that Carr almost succeeded in “destroying the quaking society of Plockhoy to a naile,” and, in essence, erasing it from posterity’s pages. Alas, no journalists or photographers were present to document the tragedy. And so little remains of this proud man stripped of colony, country, and purpose. Yet, Plockhoy survived, miraculously reappearing, blind and destitute, with his wife in the Mennonite town of Germantown, Pennsylvania, thirty years later.

Zierikzee

Who was Plockhoy and how did he end up in the New World leading a community dedicated to alleviating suffering and social inequality?

Plockhoy was born in Zierikzee around 1625 although no records exist to pinpoint exactly where and when. Zierikzee is a port town of 10,000 inhabitants located in the heart of the Dutch seafaring province of Zeeland. It had been inhabited since 2000 BC but officially founded in 849 and had

become one of Zeeland's "round" cities, today still ringed by remnants of fourteenth-century fortified walls that were girdled by water kept in by an outer dike.

Spain had already occupied Holland for sixty years during the Eighty-Year War [1568-1648] when Plockhoy was born. The occupation had ushered in the iconoclastic humanism of Erasmus and Protestantism, which questioned papal authority and other hallowed institutions. Science, logic, and pragmatism threatened traditional orthodoxies. Rampages of iconoclasm – the smashing of Catholic images – by roving bands led by Protestant nobles and Calvinist exiles occurred in Zeeland and throughout Holland. Plockhoy's youth coincided with Zierikzee's heyday, Holland's Golden Age and the ascension of artists like Vermeer and Rembrandt. Holland was a world power and a unique society characterized by a deep estrangement from traditions, making it, arguably, the first modern society.

Zierikzee's ships, loaded with salt, herring, cloth, brandy, lumber, and farm products sailed throughout the Mediterranean and Europe, up to Denmark and the Baltic, connecting Holland with new worlds and old. Its fishing fleet ventured as far as Iceland to fish for cod. But they were vulnerable to attack by – take your pick – Spanish, French, or English warships (or Dunkirkers and other privateers hiring on with anyone who would have them) intent on challenging Dutch shipping prowess. Herring boats were escorted by warships,

but to no avail. William of Orange's provisional government even sanctioned hero-pirate, Piet Heyn, to commit high seas misdeeds. In true swashbuckling style, he captured Spain's Silver Armada in 1629.

Zierikzee was the West India Company's second principal port after Amsterdam and eventually its ships (including slave ships) sailed to the New World and returned loaded down with pelts or tobacco. Textile salesmen, fishermen, and butter merchants combed Zierikzee's bustling market for bargains while rambunctious sailors on leave killed time with drink and other more sinful diversions. Both Erasmus and Albrecht Dürer noted how annoyingly clangorous Zierikzee was.

Young Plockhoy's best friend, the physician Galenus de Haan, a few years Plockhoy's senior, was to have an enormous influence on Plockhoy's life and writings. The two boys were part of the sizeable Mennonite community that had emigrated from Switzerland around 1570. But now the Mennonites in Holland were undergoing severe sectarian fractures at this time.

De Haan's father was the leader of the Mennonite congregation. Meanwhile, the anti-sectarian Collegiants challenged the Mennonites to stop their internal bickering. Collegiants were basically progressive Mennonites who advocated replacing ministers, creeds, in effect, all organized churches with *collegia prophetica*, meetings in the round where people of various faiths could gather

to read Scripture, sing psalms, and discuss the Bible and contemporary issues. Both de Haan and Plockhoy became ardent Collegiants. They were convinced that these *collegia* were the "only way to abolish all lording over consciences." The Collegiants broke away – ironically – from the schismatics (a schism of a schism).

In 1646 de Haan moved to Amsterdam to promote his Collegiant ideas. Plockhoy followed two years later at the end of the Eighty-Year War.

Amsterdam

In Amsterdam, the unorthodox de Haan established his medical practice and was elected preacher of *Het Lam* [The Lamb, now the Singelkerk] where he promoted Collegiant ideas and struggled for religious freedom in the shadow of Calvinism, Holland's state religion, which attempted to enforce spiritual conformity.

Holland was a trade giant, wages were high, and its ships sailed the world over. Holland's fortunes were further aided by England's internal strife that allowed it to undersell English merchants and dominate trade in England's own colonies. Amsterdam's city hall, constructed in Dam Square in 1650, was called the "eighth wonder of the world" and signaled Holland's arrival as a world power and Amsterdam as the financial/trade center of the world – truly the "Empress of Europe."

But Dutch prosperity was most arresting in the arts – specifically

in painting and philosophy. Grotius (Hugo de Groot) was drafting the basic tenets of what still serves as today's international maritime law while the paintings of Steen, Vermeer, Hals, and Rembrandt, signaled the humanistic drift from religious themes, and toward everyday life itself. This was also reflected in a prevailing atmosphere of tolerance and a skepticism of established beliefs. Amsterdam became a center of scientific thought while people of many faiths and philosophies found refuge here: scientists and philosophers considered heretical elsewhere – Mennonites, Jews, Puritans, even Catholics – found clandestine attics to practice their faith in.

Plockhoy arrived in 1648 and wasted no time installing himself among Amsterdam's intellectual circles, becoming involved in an ad hoc clique of writers, "lovers of the noble art of poetry," and artists known as the Parnassis of

Y. [today spelled "Ij," the name of the river behind Amsterdam].

The Parnassians [or Reformateurs] were not some gaggle of sour academics or blithe band of bohemians but a serious "art school for the promotion of virtue." They gathered frequently in an informal manner around a table in the Sweet Rest, an inn owned by the group's "head poet," the irreverent Jan Zoet, to engage in heated discussions "of political and philosophical import." Other members included renowned artist-Mennonite, Govert Flinck and poets Karel Verloove and Jacob Steendam.

They hoped to improve the moral tenor of Amsterdam through the "abolition of various customs," and advance the cause of the poor, which they did by establishing the Oranje-Appel orphanage together with the Mennonites.

Zoet usually commenced the

evening by asking a "meaningful and soul-searching question" like "When a man by marriage is bound to a woman, may he sleep with his maid-servant without transgression?" To this Plockhoy replied "yes," claiming the Bible did indeed condone polygamy. Some of the Parnassis members, including Zoet, agreed. The versified repartees grew robust, perhaps fueled by small measures of gin. Plockhoy's poet-friends, Steendam and Verloove, offended by Plockhoy's arguments, issued bitter rebuttals. Steendam characterized Plockhoy and his supporters as "patriarchs of polygamy." In 1662 however, the two offered poems to support Plockhoy's elaborate settlement prospectus.

Conservative critics quickly tried to convert Plockhoy's intellectual exercise into a scandalous advocacy of polygamy issue. "It was said that Plockhoy ... asserts upon scriptural authority that a man may have as many wives as he can support," one such opportunistic critic blustered.

Plockhoy probably spent much time writing during these years – in Dutch *and* English – developing into an earnest and tireless enthusiast for social progress. Meanwhile, Parnassian discussions may have turned to the ferment in Oliver Cromwell's England, which seemingly offered many hopes for dreamers like Plockhoy who wrote, "I resolved for awhile ... to leave my family and native country." Maybe he just needed to escape the polygamy controversies. Regardless, by June 1658, he was in London looking for sponsor-



*Delaware or Lenni-Lenape ("Original People") were among the first Indians to come in contact with Europeans (Dutch, English, & Swedish) as early as 1600. Plockhoy had envisioned friendly relations with the natives but the "Original People" were mystified by his claims to the land. (Credit: *Indians in Pennsylvania*, published by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.)*

ship for his ideas for an equitable society.

London & Cromwell

*“looking round-about me, where
to make a beginning to rectifie
those evils, I found no better
object in Christendome, then ...
the Lord Protector...”*

- Pieter Plockhoy

The mystery of why Plockhoy thought Oliver Cromwell, anti-royalist Lord Protector of the Commonwealth with its Puritanical and “reasonable” order, would be sympathetic to him remains largely unresolved. Perhaps it was Cromwell’s anti-papist sentiments or the public image of Cromwell’s enlightened progressiveness – in 1649 he was the hope of all of Europe’s Protestants.

England's dynamic social climate of poverty and hope and dizzying stir of prophetic schemes and intriguing ideas captivated Plockhoy. Despite Cromwell's Blasphemy Act [1650], pamphleteering radicals and street agitators continued to rail and present petitions to Parliament, who were busy executing Levellers and banning maypoles, theatrical performances, Sunday strolls, and Christmas. Meanwhile Ranters ranted against the entire idea of sin; Diggers advocated separation of church and state and equality of the sexes; and female Levellers petitioned Parliament for better education and equality for the poor. And then there were the Quakers, Fifth Monarchists, and Independents ... basically *all* of them believed government needed a moral soul. In this context it is

easy to see how, although an uncommon man, Plockhoy was also a man of his time and place.

Ploekhoy, however, thought it best to found an idealistic community somewhere removed from the sins of the rest of the world. [It seems he failed to see the inconsistency with his universalist ideas.] Other firebrands held sway over



Frontpiece to Jan Zoet's 1675 collection of poetry. Zoet, Ploekhoy's poet-friend, hosted informal meetings to engage in heated discussions "of political and philosophical import." (Credit: Bart Plantenga)

Plockhoy's development. Samuel Hartlib, a Polish progressive, was convinced the entire state needed transforming. Gerard Winstanley, of the Diggers, presented Cromwell with plans for communal utopias. Leveller Giles Calvert, advocated for the poor and probably published Plockhoy's *A Way Propounded* as well as activist and Christian communalist, William Walwyn who may have aided Plockhoy with the English wording in his pamphlets. They, in turn, were probably influenced by the German utopian, Johann Andreae's [1586-1654] blueprints for a geometrically fortified "republic of workers living in equality."

Plockhoy set to work to win Cromwell's support for his plans. His first letter, dated June 24, 1658, addressed Cromwell as the "Mighty and (as I hope) Prudent Lord." The letter, perhaps written with Hartlib assisting with the English, presented his essential ideas of equality in faith, religious tolerance, and the extension of the Lord's kingdom via the Collegiant's *collegia prophetica*.

In his second letter Plockhoy wrote: "One should leave the world for posterity in a better state than how one found it. I have made this my contribution..." He eventually gained an audience with Cromwell, reporting that "I was heard several times with patience." However, despite a certain decorum, Cromwell may have remained distracted – after all, he was ill with ague or malarial fits, his fragile commonwealth was imploding, and he was worried about the health of his most beloved daughter, Elizabeth.

Then suddenly Cromwell died on September 3, 1658. But Plockhoy remained undaunted. With Parliament back in session in January 1659, he redoubled his efforts sending letters to both Parliament and Cromwell's son – and successor – Richard.

That same month, Plockhoy published his pamphlet, *The Way to the Peace and Settlement of These Nations...* “to awaken Public Spirits” and foster interest among English citizens. The pamphlet, signed “Pieter Cornelius van Zurik-Zee, a lover of truth and peace,” consisted of the two

Cromwell letters and one written to Parliament on the subject of the *collegia prophetica*, which encompassed his (and Hartlib's) ecumenical vision of religious tolerance and an all-embracing universal church which would finally empower the disinherited.

Plockhoy's ideas, however, got lost in the bedlam that followed the Commonwealth's disintegration. Still this did not discourage him. Plockhoy was never content with mere what-if pipe dreams. He wanted action, concrete results as his ideas drifted from religious to social activism to "give ear to the poor." There is evidence, however scant, that Plockhoy and his circle convinced some "well affected persons" to sanction the development of three cooperative communities to "promote so good and pious a work." Donors offered 100 pounds each to bring the "little commonwealths" to fruition. Some evidence hints that the communes *were* developed – one each in London, Bristol, and Ireland, with plans for more on the mainland.

In 1660, Richard Cromwell's tenuous hold on power vanished and he fled England, making way for Charles II, who ascended the throne on May 29, 1660 and commenced a vigorous campaign to suppress opponents. Times had soured for Plockhoy's ilk. Charles showed no great disposition to the Dutchman's fancies. But Plockhoy seemed unwilling to accept this and remained in England until late 1661. This meant he probably witnessed the gruesome events surrounding Cromwell's corpse. Royalists had

not forgotten Cromwell's beheading of King Charles I in 1661. They exhumed Cromwell's body from Westminster Abbey and dragged his corpse through London's streets. On the anniversary of Charles' beheading, Cromwell was hung in a public square for a day. Then they lopped off his head and impaled it on a pole, paraded it around London, before sticking it on a spiked Westminster fence to horrify passersby – for 25 years!

If this did not open Plockhoy's eyes to the (lack of) writing on the wall, then what would!? Yet, somehow he remained indomitable and undaunted. London had made him an articulate pamphleteer. Upon returning to Amsterdam in late 1661, he continued his quest of converting his ideas into reality unaware that fate in the person of Charles II would again interfere with his plans some three years later, 3000 miles away.

Preparations in Amsterdam

"...that ...Plockhoy ... agree to depart by the first ship ... to the aforesaid colony ... to reside there and to work at farming, fishing, handicrafts, etc. ... [so] that provision may thereby be made for others to come."

- Contract signed by the Amsterdam Magistrates and Plockhoy on June 6, 1662

Plockhoy wasted no time switching his sights to Amsterdam's magistrates, the College of XIX, who had assumed management responsibilities of New Netherland from the West India

Company. Between November 1661 and May 1662 he wrote them seven letters outlining his settlement proposals. Plockhoy's fourth letter of January 1662, included 117 articles to be used to govern his settlement.

Would the restructured remains of the West India Company, formed in 1621 to promote trade and colonization in North America, be interested in such utopian reveries? Though it had sent settlers as early as 1624, its patroonship system, which encouraged stockholders to become landlords, failed to inspire much colonization because it actually preferred fur profits to a stable colony. The company's Delaware Bay colony, chartered to exploit whaling, never developed for that very reason. By 1640, the West India Company had developed a more pragmatic policy of religious tolerance and a charter that made emigration more attractive to humbler recruits to spur colonization. Still these endeavors met with little success, attracting few Dutch recruits who saw little opportunity for bettering their lot.

On April 20 1662, Amsterdam's magistrates agreed to fund Plockhoy's plans to settle a colony along Delaware Bay, in Zwaanendael. A little utopia in the name of profit seemed like a good investment at this juncture.

Plockhoy signed the agreement in early June and agreed to present "the names of 25 persons, who will agree to depart by the first ship ... to the aforesaid colony ... to reside there and to work at farming, fishing, handicrafts, etc.,

and to be as diligent as possible not only to live comfortably themselves, but also that provision may thereby be made for others to come.” In exchange, Plockhoy negotiated a 25-year tax exemption for his colony, the right to much of the profits and to choose as much territory as they could develop and protect, plus the right to make their own laws.

Amsterdam’s magistrates offered loans of 100 guilders to each man. Women and children traveled free.

His 84-page *Korte Verhael van Nieuw Nederlants*, (“Brief Account of New Netherland...”), published in October, bundled the seven letters in one pamphlet and announced his intention to found a settlement for “the many poor and needy families.” In it Plockhoy tried to allay the fears of more conservative parties who thought his insistence of communal equality would mean a loss of individuality. He also reassured sponsors that although his experimental community would be based on moral concerns, it would still be profitable and competitive in the marketplace.

His collaborative and not so brief *Kort en Klaer Ontwerp...* (“Brief and Concise Plan...”) sounded more like a travel brochure meant to lure settlers to a mythical land of limitless abundance. “New Netherland is the flower, the noblest of all lands ... birds obscure the sky, so numerous in their flight, the animals roam wild ... fish swarm in the waters and exclude the light...” Poems by old Parnassis friends, Steendam and Verloove, encouraged Plockhoy and assured sponsors that his ideas were sound. [Steendam who

had lived in New Netherland, 1650–1660, wrote glowing reports from the New World, touting its many virtues – “the purity of the air...” – making him, arguably, not only the New World’s first poet but also its first publicist.]

Plockhoy zealously set about recruiting the right people from four categories – “Husbandmen, Handicrafts people, Mariners and Masters of Arts & Sciences” – idealists with skills befitting the project. He offered attractive inducements and the thrill of adventure. In September, provisions were collected and a ship secured. His efforts produced underwhelming results, however; he had hoped against hope to enlist 100 families but only managed to persuade twenty-four, many of whom likely came from his old friend, De Haan’s Collegiant Church.

Finally on May 5, 1663, the *St. Jacob* filled “with their baggage and farm utensils” set sail. On July 28 they approached land after an uneventful voyage – as much as over two months on the open sea can be. The colonists waded ashore and stood huddled together on the banks of Delaware Bay, gazing in awe at the marvelous land with “all kinds of necessities and small articles ... as for agricultural purposes and clothing, etc. also two half bags of hops, guns for the people...” at their feet.

Arrival in Delaware

“...in such places as are separate from other men where we may with less impediment or hindrance love one another, and mind the

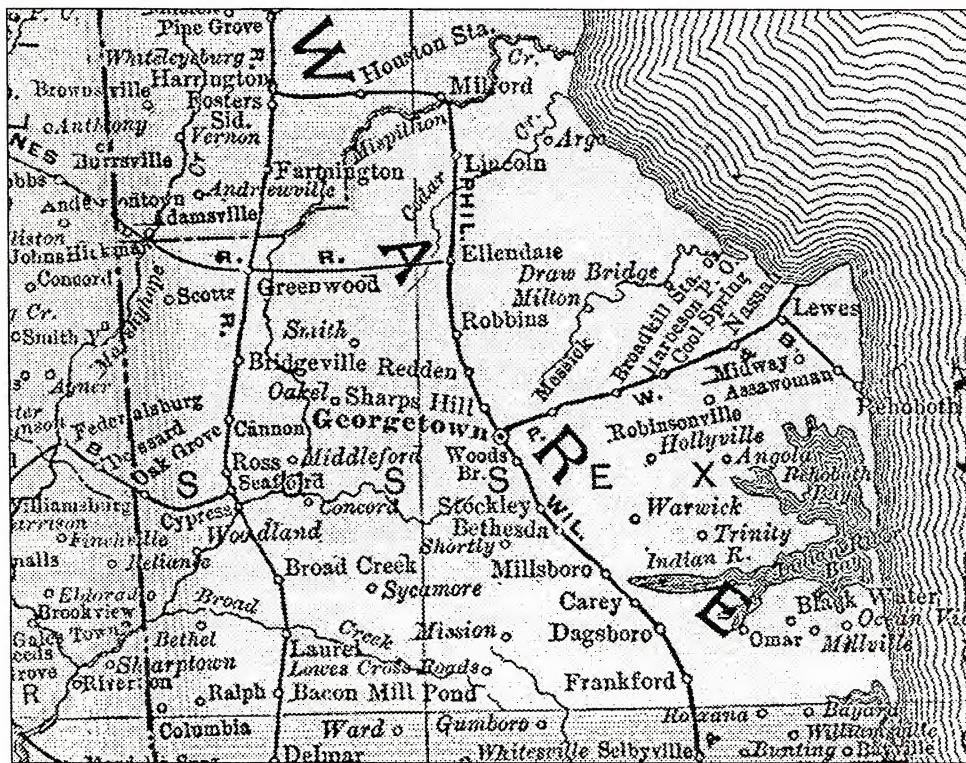
wonders of God.”
- Pieter Plockhoy, *A Way Propounded...*

“...the air, land, and sea are pregnant with her bounty ...”
- Jacob Steendam

The Dutch have a saying: mother poverty is the bride of dreamers. Plockhoy was a dreamer, simultaneously impoverished by circumstances and enriched by the hope of his dreams. The New World offered plenty of room for the dreams dreamt by spiritual dissidents, but such dreams can swiftly sour.

Plockhoy and his followers trudged up the sandy shore off Cape Henlopen, near Hoornkill, negotiating their way through driftwood, dragging provisions, farm implements [trenching gouges, single-wheel ploughs] – their muskets and wheel-lock pistols loaded and ready. They took frequent pause to gaze gradually inward – bogs, lush with reeds and never-before-seen flowers and a trail meandering further inland.

It was like a Henri Rousseau canvas: dense, mysterious, primeval forests of towering oak and pine; clearings and banks holding profuse bouquets of flora and wild fruits; cypress near water, willows in the swamps; and wild fauna – bears, foxes, beavers, eagles, and unknown creatures – in unbelievable abundance. Fish – halibut, mackerel, bass – filled inlets with their silvery flopping bodies like his prospectus had promised or the fertile imaginings dripping off a florid pen. It was by no means an empty canvas of a wilderness. However, it was a vast tapestry of



Present-day Lewes is near the location of Zwaanendael, Plockhoy's settlement on this 1895 map of Sussex County, Delaware. (Credit: CFC Productions, www.LivGenMI.com/1895)

permanent Delaware settlement was Pieter Minuit's New Sweden colony and Fort Christina on the site of present day Wilmington in 1638. Later, Lord Baltimore settled nearby and used native tribes to harass Dutch and Swedish settlers with an eye on an eventual English conquest. By the 1640s, several hundred Dutch (Svannekens or "people from the sea," to the local tribes), Finnish, and Swedish settlers lived in the Delaware Bay region. Stuyvesant built Fort Casimir in 1651. It quickly became a powder keg of jealously guarded Swedish settlements, ragtag Dutch outposts, and skeptical

interconnected native tribes.

The colonists settled inland near present-day Lewes. They had already missed the spring growing season and still had to clear land – felling trees, burning the stumps – for winter crops and begin construction of their "little commonwealth."

Tensions Plockhoy had not anticipated arose immediately. He had envisioned friendly relations with the natives but the local Algonquins were mystified by Plockhoy's claims to the land. A letter written to the Amsterdam magistrates reported that the natives "had declared they never sold the Dutch any land to inhabit." The land had already been sold several times over (to the Swedes at least once) bypassing tribes who probably had little claim to it.

Most notable among Plockhoy's neighbors in this sparsely populated area were the Lenni Lenape and Nanticoke tribes. They were portrayed as tall, athletic, trustworthy, and curiously relaxed. They settled local waterways where they fished, farmed, and hunted. According to Dutch scholar, Claes Wassenaer, who, in the 1630s, wrote: "There is little authority known among these nations. They live almost all free."

Although Americus Vespucci was said to have visited Delaware's shores first, Dutch Captain Kornelius May [Cape May is named after him] is given credit for "discovering" Delaware Bay. Forty years before Plockhoy's arrival he built Fort Nassau, at the site of Gloucester, New Jersey. Traders arrived to pursue their fortunes in furs. Swedes and Finns arrived in 1638, but the first

Indians. Murders went unsolved but were quickly avenged. Dutch and English merchants regularly filled vessels with guns, alcohol, cloth, and trinkets to trade with Indians for pelts and furs.

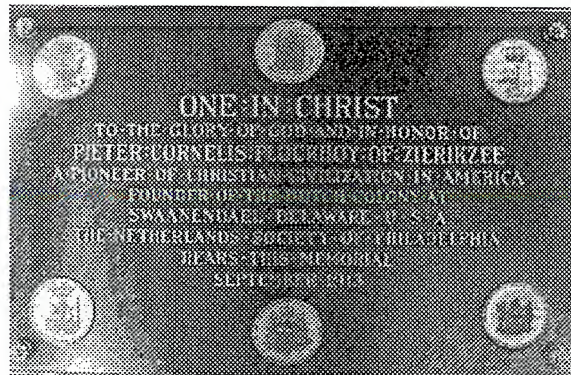
Zwaanendael was first settled in 1630 when Dutch captain, David de Vries, brought Cornelis Jacobs of Hoorn with thirty-two settlers – mostly French-speaking Walloons – tools and cattle, to start a whaling and farming settlement. However, local Lenni Lenapes destroyed the settlement after a misunderstanding involving a stolen coat of arms. Upon de Vries's return he found only some charred vestiges and bleached bones. Retaliations only made things worse.

In 1656, the West India Company sold the Delaware region to the City of Amsterdam, which estab-

lished a colony at Fort Casimir called New Amstel. In 1658, the Dutch finally established a *permanent* trading post there called Sekonnessinck, although the (re)building of the fort near Hoornkil could not proceed from lack of settlers in the area. It was not until 1659 that D'Hinoyossa established the town here, idly promising it would become a great prosperous, sin-free, diked city. Today the Zwaanendael Museum, modeled after Hoorn's city hall, commemorates both the Hoorn and Plockhoy endeavors.

By the time Plockhoy arrived, relations with the locals had thoroughly spoiled. Although Plockhoy was not the first settler, his colony of "universal Christian brotherhood" based on moral principles was so unique that it left them estranged from their neighbors. Plockhoy had been intent on avoiding the mistakes of the Puritans who had used their spiritual beliefs to justify wiping out the natives from their chosen land, and those of traders and hucksters inspired only by profit and power. But unforeseen circumstances forced Plockhoy to focus on agriculture, a comprehensive criminal code, and more extensive defenses, including the institution of sentry duty. Plockhoy also discovered, to his disillusionment, that he had to coerce others into rotating decision-making responsibilities and new tasks. Eventually however, the settlement succeeded in its endeavor to survive – just in time to suffer its dramatic demise.

Charles Calvert, of England's Virginia and Maryland territories, came to snoop around the Delaware colony, one month after Plockhoy's arrival. Everyone knew he coveted the Delaware



A plaque dedicated to Plockhoy, "A Pioneer of Christian Civilization in America." 250 years after Plockhoy's dream was shattered, the Netherlands Society of Philadelphia donated this plaque to the city hall of Zierikzee, where it now hangs. (Credit: Zierikzee Archives.)

colony, and yet, a temporary, if strained, reprieve was negotiated between Dutch, English, Swedish, and Indian factions. Meanwhile, to the north, James offered generous terms of surrender to the Dutch, because James preferred the profits of an intact colony to the spoils of a ruined one.

In March 1664, King Charles II, no fan of the Dutch "usurpers" who had attempted to extradite him back to England from exile as part of a treaty between Holland and Cromwell, set out to enhance the eminence of his crown with the second Anglo-Dutch War [1664-1667]. His legacy of conquest and glory would come at the expense of the Dutch colonists, among them the peaceful Zwaanendael settlement.

Stench, smoke and all traces of the settlement all but dissolved

into the oblivion of the surrounding countryside on that fateful day in August of 1664. On September 8, Stuyvesant surrendered New Netherland to England.

The Lost Years

Plockhoy was so thoroughly forgotten – his memory so thoroughly obliterated by the Zwaanendael skirmish – that twenty-five years later, in 1688, a certain brazen, Abraham van Akkeren, translated Plockhoy's work into Dutch and took full credit for the plagiarized texts – with no mention of Plockhoy. However, the translation was so abominable that no one paid it any mind. Gone was the dynamic enthusiasm of Plockhoy's prose and Plockhoy was shoved ever further into the shadows of history.

Plockhoy's life after 1664 is nebulous at best. One source notes that in January 1682 Plockhoy was ordered by the town of Lewes to build a home to certain specifications within a year or relinquish his rights to his plot of land and be fined ten pounds. By May, he had become an English subject but was unable to meet the deadline and was forced to flee.

Plockhoy, by then old, blind, and destitute, did not disappear into total obscurity. He and his wife tramped around, only to arrive seemingly out of nowhere thirteen years later in 1694, in Germantown, Pennsylvania. This Mennonite community, the first

permanent Mennonite congregation, took up a collection for the Plockhoys. Two neighbors built them a small house and planted a garden on half an acre of land on the "end street of town" (present-day Washington Lane in the Germantown section of Philadelphia.)

Plockhoy is last referred to in John Kipshaven's will, who bequeathed twenty shillings to Plockhoy. The couple lived out their last days in peace perhaps regaling their neighbors daily with fantastic tales until his death somewhere between 1695 and 1700.

Plockhoy did receive some posthumous homages. The American historian, Samuel

Pennypacker, discovered Plockhoy's writings in 1899. Dutch Socialist historian, H.P.G. Quack, wrote enthusiastically about him in 1911. Socialist John Downie declared him the father of socialism in the 1930s and French historian, Jean Seguy, wrote an extensive account of Plockhoy in the propitious year of 1968. But it has mostly been left to a few Mennonite historians – Leland Harder and Irvin Horst – to keep his memory alive. Horst in a 1949 article on Plockhoy said, "While Plockhoy's plans failed, and in some details were utopian, he must, nevertheless, be considered as one of the heralds of that religious freedom which modern nations accept and cherish." When asked why Plockhoy continues to founder in obscurity, despite his

contributions, Zierikzee town archivist, L. Flikweert, could only shrug his shoulders, the same shrug most people have offered since the seventeenth century whenever Plockhoy's name has come up.

Plockhoy continues to occupy little more than a footnote in most history books. It is as if history has no room for the likes of a Pieter Plockhoy who sacrificed everything for his "little community" based on old ideals. Curiously, this made him a man centuries ahead of his time. ☞

— Bart Plantenga (ninplant@xs4all.nl) currently lives in Amsterdam where he is a freelance editor and writer of various fiction and nonfiction. He is also a radiomaker at two independent radio stations in Amsterdam.

Mennonite Mirth: Stories on the Way to Market

By Jep Hostetler

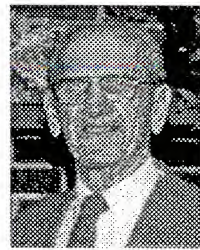
During my childhood I was privileged to hear many stories from my father. As Mark Twain would say, "I will set down a tale...it may be history, it may be only a legend, a tradition. It may have happened, it may not have happened. But it could have happened." Thus, some of my father's stories were suspect in terms of their validity for actually happening. My father-in-law, A.J. Metzler, was also suspect because he would preface some of his stories with the line, "They tell this to be a fact."

My father often told the story about two gentlemen who met on a narrow mountain pass. The first

gentleman said to the second, "Please step aside so I may pass by." The second gentleman replied, "I never step aside for a fool," upon which the first gentleman countered, "I always do," as he stepped aside and allowed the second man to pass by. The reason I mention this story is that it is closely related to the story they tell about "wagoning" in the early nineteenth century. This particular story was handed down to the descendants of Jacob Kraybill, "an old flour miller of Marietta."

This oral tale was often told, holding that Kraybill, accompanied by his younger brother, was

headed off to Philadelphia to the market. The younger brother, who came along to help with the unloading, also served as the tender of the brake on the wagon. As they traveled east, with their



A. J. Metzler: "They tell this to be a fact."

wagon heavily laden with goods, they met another horse-drawn wagon coming toward Lancaster. The other driver showed no inclination to yield the right-of-way on the rather narrow road. Mr. Kraybill, a powerfully-built man, sternly

warned the other driver, "If you don't allow me to have my share of the road I'll have to do something I really do not want to do." The teamster sized up Mr. Kraybill, calculated his odds, and

then meekly pulled aside, permitting Mr. Kraybill to pass by. Farther down the road the younger brother could no longer contain his curiosity. "What would you have done," he inquired, "that you didn't like to do, if that fellow would not have pulled over?" "I would have pulled over," said Kraybill dryly.*

Apparently this version of the story was not actually put into print until over a century after the occurrence.

Another surviving story about hauling materials to the market in Philadelphia also comes from the Lancaster, Pennsylvania area.

It seems that Deacon Elvin Herr was hauling potatoes on his truck to Philadelphia from Lancaster County. As a helpful Mennonite he would pick up hitchhikers from time to time. On one such occasion he welcomed two riders from Villanova University. The conversation revealed that they were studying for the priesthood. Conversation then led to theological questions and whether or not Christians should be nonresistant. The students made it clear that they felt Christians should participate in the military under normal conditions. The gentle deacon then propounded a moral question for them. "Since the apostle Paul had clearly admonished Christians to greet one another with a holy kiss, what should be the proper procedure when two Christians,

from two different countries, met as opponents on the battlefield? Should they first kiss and then try to bayonet each other, or bayonet each other and then kiss?"*

My father also told the story about two ladies who arrived at Easter worship with new hats. The first woman said to the second, "My what a lovely new hat!" The second lady replied, "I wish I

could say the same about yours," to which the first lady replied, "you could if you lie like I do." There must have been something about using words to

"There must have been something about using words to get even with another person that intrigued my father."

get even with another person that intrigued my father.

The story that came to us, usually at reunions, was told with gusto by my father-in-law. He would start by saying, "Did I ever tell you the story about Joyce, when she was a little girl – the story about the rabbit?" And of course everyone present would fib and say, "No, A.J., tell us the story." "Listen closely," he would say, "because they tell this to be a fact." "One day Joyce was out behind the bushes where she had captured a wild rabbit. She had the rabbit by the ears and was talking loudly to the bunny." "One and one are two, one and one are two, one and one are two," she said over and over. Overhearing her noisy one-way conversation, papa Metzler asked the young lass, "What are you doing to that poor rabbit?" "Well," said Joyce, "they say that

rabbits can multiply, but this dumb bunny can't even add."

It would be interesting to hear from our readers regarding humorous stories from your past, or even present experiences. We remember stories because of their bigger-than-life qualities and because humor helps us remember. When you think of incidents that linger, they often contain a bit of embarrassment, a helpful lesson, or a curious twist on our heritage. I encourage you to send your stories to my attention. Attempt to document the stories as to who told them, where the storyteller lived, how the person is related to you, and why you remember the particular story. 🐰

*Stories told by John L. Ruth from his soon-to-be-published *The Earth is the Lord's: A Narrative History of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference*.

Do you have stories in your memory that could be shared with the readers? Please send your stories to Jep Hostetler at hostetler.2@osu.edu or 193 E. Frambes Ave., Columbus, OH 43201.

— *Jep Hostetler, Ph.D., Columbus, Ohio, is a humor consultant and author. He is an associate professor emeritus at the Ohio State University College of Medicine. He and his wife Joyce serve as the staff persons for the Mennonite Medical Association.*

I Wish I'd Been There:

An Amish Ministers' Meeting, Noble, Iowa, 1874

By Lois Gugel

A few miles north of Noble, Iowa in Washington County, Iowa a large, red, bank-type barn stands along a gravel road. It is an exciting place to visit with its brick-lined floors below – where cattle come for water, and the large open area above which large amounts of hay are stored. Yes, to visit there now is intriguing but I really wish I'd have been there May 24-27, 1874.

Why, what was happening? More than a thousand Amish men and women were attending an Amish Conference (Dienerversammlung). The purpose of the meeting was to bring unity to the Amish churches of America. Sunday, May 24 the conference began with admonition, prayer, and a sermon followed by “witness by two ministers.” The afternoon service followed much the same pattern.

Monday, May 25 the rules of the order of the ninth ministers' meeting were read and accepted. There had been some disagreement about the rules and what was happening in some of the area churches. In the middle of some of these discussions was Benjamin Eicher, bishop of an Amish church which he had begun in 1862. At some point during these meetings, Bishop John K. Yoder from Ohio confronted Eicher because Eicher was wearing buttons on his coat rather than hooks and eyes. Yoder told him that a minister should wear cloth-




More than a thousand Amish men and women met here in an effort to bring unity to the Amish churches of America. (Credit: Lester J. Miller)

ing that would show people he was a minister, not a banker.

When reporting this meeting in the Mount Pleasant *Free Press*, the editor described the Amish, their dress and lifestyle in some detail. Then he told about Benjamin Eicher who was “rebellious against the custom of hooks and eyes.” The editor called Eicher a man of broad and liberal views and “I believe not only willing but anxious that his church should keep up with that spirit of improvement which so strongly characterizes this present age.” No official action was recorded. But after this meeting Eicher took his church to be an independent church (Eicher Emmanuel Mennonite Church) and in 1893 it became part of the General Conference Mennonites.

While Eicher believed strongly enough that he was willing to

make this change, many of the leaders still wanted to work at keeping unity. The church was at a definite turning point.

I wonder how I would have reported those meetings in the Mount Pleasant Iowa *Free Press* if I had been there? I wonder if some of the women present had ideas about how to deal with these issues, but were not allowed to voice them? I wonder if there are lessons from these stories to be learned in our churches today? 

Resources: *Proceedings of the Amish Ministers' Meetings 1862-1878* by Paton Yoder and Steven R. Estes; *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*, December 1942; *Mennonites in Iowa* by Melvin Gingerich.

— Lois Gugel is a retired teacher who now works part time as the archivist for the Mennonite Historical Society of Iowa in Kalona.

The Back Page

CONGREGATIONAL VIGNETTES 2000 — COLLECTING OURSELVES

Help Us Save Your History

By Franklin Yoder

Have you ever wondered what a Sunday morning service in 1900 was actually like? What did people wear? How did the singing sound and what types of songs were sung? How were services structured? What was the tone and focus of a sermon in 1900? In short, what was day-to-day and week-to-week congregational life like for most Mennonites 100 years ago?

We would have better answers to these questions if someone had saved more records. Today, with easy access to technology and with an increased interest in the

lives of ordinary people, we can preserve records that will give future historians opportunities to know what Mennonite congregational life was like in 2002.

Congregational Vignettes 2002 is a special project sponsored by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church. This project will preserve a detailed record of a cross-section of Mennonite congregations by systematically collecting historically relevant material from up to thirty congregations during the year 2002.

Many congregations already collect material to be placed in an archives, but this project will

focus on collecting more material and collecting it more deliberately. Most details of day-to-day and week-to-week life of a congregation are currently not saved and this project will do that by preserving a complete picture of events as varied as Sunday morning worship, potluck dinners, weddings, funerals, and church council meetings.

If you are interested in becoming part of this project, contact John Sharp by phone (219-535-7477) or by e-mail (johnes@goshen.edu). Selected congregations will be given instructions on how to begin the project.

Visit our Web site at www.goshen.edu/mcarchives/

Mennonite Historical Bulletin

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MIENNONITE

Historical Bulletin

Vol. LXII

July 2001

ISSN 0025-9357

No. 3

Drinking Anabaptist Tea and Other Tales of Integration

by Peter J. Dyck

The road to Integration/Transformation has been a long one. Herald of Truth editor John F. Funk, who helped Russian Mennonites migrate to the prairie states and provinces in the 1870s, hoped the immigrants would join MC conferences. They didn't. MCs and GCs cooperated in sending relief supplies to India during the great famine of 1896-97. When sending food and money led to sending missionaries to India, GC leaders asked MC leaders whether they could cooperate. MCs said no. Mennonite Central Committee, however, was inter-Mennonite from its beginning in 1920. MCs and GCs worked and prayed together during Civilian Public Service (CPS), 1941-46. Goshen Biblical Seminary (MC) and Mennonite Biblical Seminary (GC) affiliated to become Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Such shared experiences led to the formation of dually affiliated congregations – 129 by 1995. Peter and Elfrieda Dyck know about this journey from personal experience, as the following vignettes illustrate.

Scene 1:

Elfrieda and I had been serving with the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Europe for almost ten years when we met with the executive committee in the old



Peter and Elfrieda Dyck pointed the way to integration. (Photo Credit: MCC Photograph Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana)

Atlantic Hotel in Chicago. The year was 1949 and we were terminating, at least for the time being, in order to finish my college education. During a break, Rev. J.J. Thiessen, a great leader and wonderful Christian – the man who had ordained me a few years earlier – took me aside for a serious discussion. Was it true, he wanted to know, that I was going to attend Goshen College?

I told him that what he had heard was true. I also shared with him that the major reason for this was to hear

Prof. Harold Bender lecture on Anabaptism. Thiessen was not pleased. He attempted to dissuade me, giving one reason after another why Goshen was not a good choice. Why not go to Bethel or Bluffton College? I will always remember his final comment (given in all seriousness), that as a General Conference member, not a teenager but already thirty-four years old, I was setting a bad example for the youth of the General Conference.

Scene 2:

We went to Goshen. We had barely unpacked our suitcases and registered when I was called into the office of President Ernest Miller. He welcomed me warmly, chatted about this and that, and finally came to the point. "You are older than most students," he began. "You have served many years with MCC. You are ordained. You and Elfrieda have gained visibility in our churches when reporting on the refugee movement." He paused, and I had no idea what he was leading up to. Finally he asked, "Because of all this, do you expect to receive some financial consideration from Goshen College – a discount perhaps, or a scholarship?"

We had no money and the idea of a discount sounded very good to me.

It would mean less to borrow. However, had I expected it? My answer was "No." Miller was visibly relieved, and proceeded to explain that the college could not give me financial aid, since I didn't belong to the "Old" Mennonite Church. Giving me aid could be interpreted by the General Conference as wooing one of their members away from them.

Scene 3:

I believe it was in 1952 when Harold S. Bender and I were visiting in his living room. He asked whether my brother, C.J., who was then serving with MCC in South America, was also going to attend Goshen College as I had done. Jokingly, I said it was enough for one in the family to make that mistake! Then more seriously I talked of my good experiences and said that I coveted that for many of our General Conference young people.

We continued the discussion about GC-MC cooperation in education, especially on the seminary level. Finally we agreed to invite some brethren, no more than four from each of the two conferences, for an informal discussion. I was to invite the GC representatives and Bender was to invite the MC people. I remember his suggestion that we meet in his home and that Elizabeth



Ushering in the new: Moderators Lee Snyder (Mennonite Church USA) and Ron Sawatsky (Mennonite Church Canada) are commissioned at St. Louis '99. Their pastors, Sue Clemmer (left) and Dorothy Nickel Friesen offered the commissioning prayers. (Photo Credit: John E. Sharp)

would serve tea. "Nobody can fault us for getting together and drinking Anabaptist tea," he said.

The meeting did take place. Brother Bender asked me to introduce the subject. That took me by surprise, but I began. I said something about my own good experience as a General Conference student at Goshen College and Seminary. I said I hoped we might explore ways of moving closer together in our separate

programs. I was by now attending the GC/Church of the Brethren Seminary in Chicago.

There were some questions, a few concerns, and one or two cautious, but positive, statements. I was disappointed. I guess I had expected too much from this meeting. Orie Miller was the first to leave, having said very little. As he left, he simply said, "Thanks for the tea." For some time afterward, I referred to that

The *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* is published quarterly by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Church Historical Association.

Editor: John E. Sharp; **Assistant Editor:** Ruth Schrock; **Book Review Editor:** Susan Fisher Miller; **Copy Editor:** Catherine Glenn; **Design:** Katie Hershberger; **Contributing editors:** J. Robert Charles, Marlene Epp, Reg Good, Rachel Waltner Goossen, Leonard Gross, Amos B. Hoover, Janeen Bertsche Johnson, James Juhnke, Russell Krabill, Glenn M. Lehman, Joseph Liechty, Joseph S. Miller, Levi Miller, Steven Nolt, Erv Schlabach, Jonathan Showalter, Mary Sprunger, Dennis Stoesz, Gerald Studer, Wilmer Swope, Marilyn Helmuth Voran, Franklin Yoder.

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meeting as the thanks-for-the-tea meeting.

But the ball had started to roll. More informal meetings followed and more people participated. Usually these meetings were in connection with other meetings, such as the MCC annual meeting in the Atlantic Hotel in Chicago. And then one day the conversations became official and minutes were kept. The rest, as they say, is history.

Scene 4:

In 1967 MCC transferred us from Europe, where we had been serving for another decade, to Akron, Pennsylvania. After attending the Akron Mennonite Church (MC) for a while, we decided to become members. That turned out to be more difficult than we had anticipated, because we wanted dual membership. First the pastor and then a committee told us that we couldn't have dual membership. We suggested that perhaps the time had come for the entire congregation to belong to both the MC and GC conferences. That fell on deaf ears.

Ultimately they relented and said we could have our primary membership in the Akron congregation and a secondary membership in the GC Eden Church, Moundridge, Kansas. We objected. We asked for equal and full membership in both conferences. In subsequent discussions we were asked if we belonged to both the GC and MC conferences, were we intending to subscribe to both *The Mennonite* and the *Gospel Herald*? Were we going to double or halve our giving? Would we attend both the MC and GC general assemblies?

A final argument, intended to persuade us of the folly of dual membership, was that of statistics. "Suppose we all did that. Just look how that would mess up our membership statistics: overnight the church would have doubled, because we would all be counted twice – once by the GCs and again by the MCs." Someone suggested that the trouble with Elfrieda and me was that we had been too long with MCC.

But then it happened, praise the Lord! A few years later the Akron

What began as a simple pragmatic procedure became a prophetic symbolic move. We were all ready to become one conference. God was breathing a new Spirit into our churches.

church voted unanimously to become a dual-conference church. Yes, and we did subscribe to *The Mennonite* and the *Gospel Herald*. We did attend both assemblies. The church did – and still does – contribute financially to both MC and GC mission boards, colleges, etc. It was a bit of a hassle and on the surface it didn't make much sense. But we did it because everybody believed that this was a temporary inconvenience on the road to full amalgamation. Basic to all of this was the desire to strengthen our witness in the world, to heed the prayer of Jesus: "...that they may all be one....so that the world may believe that you have sent me." (John 17:21)

Scene 5:

And then came the Bethlehem '83 assembly where GC moderator, Jake Tilitzky, and MC moderator, Ross Bender, stood to welcome delegates. Two podiums had been placed at opposite ends of the stage. The moderators picked up the podiums and moved slowly toward each other, dialoguing as they went. Finally they met in the middle, shook hands and embraced. The applause was overwhelming! What began as a simple pragmatic procedure became a prophetic symbolic move. We were all ready to become **one** conference. God was breathing a new Spirit into our churches.

Scene 6:

Other joint assemblies came and resolutions were passed. Wichita '95 delegates said, "Let's do it." Orlando '97 assemblies chose a name and a periodical. At St. Louis '99 fifteen resolutions were passed, but we stumbled on the membership question and fell apart at the 49th parallel. Must we have casualties on the way to integration? May God help us! 🙏

—Peter J. Dyck was born in Russia, moved to Canada with his parents at age 12, and graduated from Goshen College and Bethany Theological Seminary. He served as pastor, but most of his life was spent in service with the Mennonite Central Committee. He is married to Elfrieda Klassen. They have two daughters and five grandchildren. Peter is now in active retirement in Scottsdale, Pennsylvania and with Elfrieda attends the Kingview Mennonite Church.

The Baseball Commissioner and the Mennonites

by Steve Nolt

Mennonites seemingly always have been intrigued by famous or powerful people with Mennonite connections. We speculate about celebrities with “Mennonite-sounding” surnames, or remark on newsmakers connected to international Mennonite Central Committee projects or domestic Mennonite Disaster Service work.

In 1914, Chicago Mennonite businessman C. B. Schmidt was curious about the genealogical ties between noted federal judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis (1866-1944) and the Swiss Brethren martyr Hans Landis. Hans Landis had given his life for his faith three hundred years earlier in Zurich, becoming – it turned out – the last Anabaptist executed in Europe and marking an end to a bloody era begun in 1526.

Schmidt made a copy of the Hans Landis story recorded in the *Martyrs Mirror* and sent it to Judge Landis, who responded with the following letter:

Judge's Chambers
United States District Court
Northern District of Illinois
Chicago

February 10, 1914

Dear Mr. Schmidt: —
I certainly appreciate the courtesy of your favor of January 30th with the enclosures. This is a subject that has long been a matter of curiosity in our family, and until the receipt of your letter I had seen nothing definite on the subject. I have transmitted a copy,

including your letter, to each member of the family, and again assure you, with my best wishes, of my appreciation.

Kenesaw M. Landis

Immediately, an excited Schmidt sent the judge's letter to John F. Funk (1835-1930) whose Elkhart, Indiana Mennonite Publishing Company had translated and issued the *Martyrs Mirror*. Judge Landis, it seemed, might assign some significance to his Mennonite roots.

Having enforced new antitrust laws in a high-profile case against the Standard Oil conglomerate, Judge Landis was already famous when Schmidt contacted him. A few years later Landis' name became a household word when he was appointed the first commissioner of major league baseball. Charged with cleaning up a game stained by scandal, Judge Landis ruled the sport for almost a quarter century, until his death.

But how was the baseball commissioner connected to the Mennonites? Judge Landis' authorized biographer, Taylor Spink, celebrated his subject as a real American patriot, but mixed in some garbled facts from the story Schmidt had passed on. “The Landises were born and bred in the American traditions,” Spink insisted, even if “the family originally was Swiss, and an early ancestor, Pete Landis, a Mennonite, was decapitated at Geneva for his religious convictions back in the sixteenth century.” The story placed the judge's ancestors “in France, and then a whole

boatload of them came to this country before the American Revolution.”

The Landis family, according to Spink, “settled in the fertile farm country near Lancaster, Pa.” near the “town of Landisville” which was “named after these Swiss settlers.”

However much Judge Landis may have enjoyed the *Martyrs Mirror* account of martyr Hans, the judge's personal connection to his past and his forbearers' faith had been tenuous. A descendant of Pennsylvania Landises from Chester County (not Lancaster, as he told his biographer), Judge Landis had been born in Butler County, Ohio where his grandparents Philip (1764-1838) and Catherine Beary (1776-1847) Landis had moved. The judge's father, Abraham H. Landis (1821-96) had joined the Northern Union army during the American Civil War, a move that may have strained whatever ties he still had to Butler County Mennonitism. Returning home Abraham named his next child after the Georgia battlefield – Kenesaw Mountain – where he had been wounded, and moved the family to Logansport, Indiana.

When it came to any Anabaptist religious heritage, there was, as the judge had written to Schmidt, “nothing definite on the subject” among the Logansport Landises. Ken Landis would grow up in a home where identification with the American nation was strong; his own name was a constant reminder of military action. Two of his brothers became Indiana congressmen and another represented the United States government in Puerto Rico after the American takeover of that island.

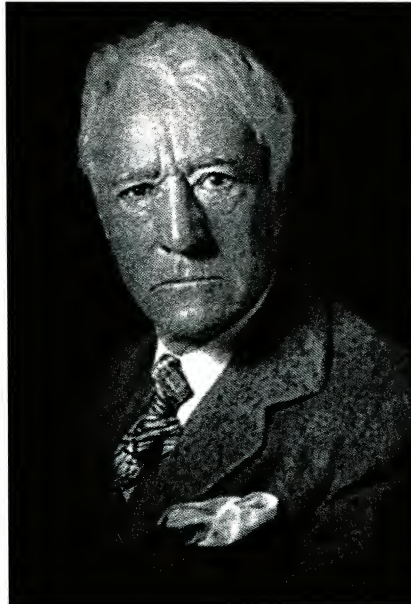
Ken Landis' journey as judge and baseball commissioner made him, by the early 1940s, one of the most recognized people in America. A self-styled "Progressive," he worked to control dissent and defend a vision of society in which the "better sort" of people managed the affairs of everyone else. Despite his power and influence, as the years wore on Landis became an increasingly discouraged and isolated man, unable to manage change and frustrated with the country that had given him his identity.

The same year that Judge Landis received the copy of the *Martyrs Mirror* story a child who shared his surname was born near Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Unlike the Judge, Miriam Landis did not have to rely on C. B. Schmidt to tell her about her connection to her heritage. Her parents David L. (1882-1961) and Annette H. Esbenschade (1883-1926) Landis passed on their faith in the context of a living, breathing community that took it seriously. Miriam attended Mellinger Mennonite Church where her father was a minister.

Yet the tradition of faith handed on to her was not simply a static thing only to be received and preserved. Indeed, Miriam's childhood coincided with a period of local debate over what sorts of changes and innovations faithfulness might actually require. What did faith mean for one's commercial, social, and community relationships? How might it grow and change to include other people? For their part, Miriam and her husband W. Ray Wenger (1910-45) were committed to extending their faith story to others when in 1937 they left Pennsylvania to live with the people of Tanganyika, in East Africa.

But if a living tradition had provided some of the resources for a pioneering move halfway around the

world, it would itself be transformed by the new experiences and cultures in Africa. As African Christians joined the story and made it their own, the Landis, Wenger, Stauffer, Shenk and other missionary families found their heritage enriched, but often challenged. In the early 1940s, for example, Miriam Landis Wenger was among those who experienced the "East African Revival"




Kenesaw Mountain Landis (1866-1944), baseball's first commissioner with ambiguous ties to his Mennonite roots. (Photo credit: Northwestern University Archives)

— a spiritual revolution that broke down racial barriers and allowed white missionaries to see as equals their African brothers and sisters in Christ. In those same years back in the United States, Judge Ken Landis was spending his last lonely and bitter days fighting a racist battle to exclude black players from major league baseball and keep the game "respectably white."

Heritage had meant different things to Ken Landis and Miriam Landis. In one case, it was an antiquarian curiosity. A distant past, it joined colonial patriots and wartime heroes to form a tale of American progress and imperial dominance. In the other

case the past was a resource, a calling, and a debt that supported a living community which passed on its promise. The faith of martyrs and ministers and ordinary folks possessed a vitality even of self-criticism and the ability to reproduce itself, cross racial and cultural lines, and include new people into its very meaning. The orientation and outcomes could hardly have been more different.

Nevertheless, it is quite likely that even today more American Mennonites recognize the name Kenesaw Mountain Landis than can identify correctly the East Africa Revival. 

—Steve Nolt teaches history at Goshen College. He has related the story, above, in a number of church and other story-telling settings. Those audiences have provided some evidence for the suggestion in the concluding sentence.

Notes

See the commentary provided by the poem "How the Deck is Stacked in the Mennonite Game," by Nina Forsythe, *theMennonite*, Oct. 6, 1998, 5.

"Landis, Hans," *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, V. 3.

Kenesaw M. Landis to C. B. Schmidt, Feb. 10, 1914, Hist Mss. 1-1, John F. Funk Papers, box 36.

C. B. Schmidt to Rev. John F. Funk, Feb. 13, 1914, *Ibid*.

J. G. Taylor Spink, *Judge Landis and Twenty-five Years of Baseball* (New York: Thomas and Crowell Co., 1947).

Joseph C. Shenk, *Silver Thread: The Ups and Downs of a Mennonite Family in Mission (1895-1995)* (Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books, 1996), 12-114.

Ibid., 75-83; Mahlon M. Hess, *Pilgrimage of Faith: Tanzania Mennonite Church, 1934-83* (Salunga, Pa.: Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities, 1985), 55-85; Louise Stoltzfus, *Quiet Shouts: Stories of Lancaster Mennonite Women Leaders* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1999), 109-10.

Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns, *Baseball: An Illustrated History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), 282-83.

Managing Mennonite Memory: Audiovisual Archives

by Dennis Stoesz
(Seventh in a Series)

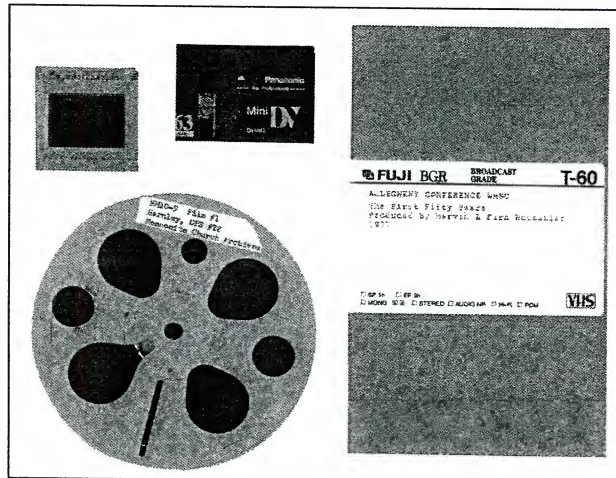
The articles in this series have focused mostly on records management. I now turn to a slightly different subject and see if here too ideas such as "historical value" and "administrative value" apply. I am talking about audiovisuals that make up our lives. Everyone must remember the missionary slide sets shown in churches on a Sunday evening. Or the film "Berlin Exodus" that Peter Dyck showed in many churches across the United States and Canada in the late 1940s. What makes these old slides and films archival?

8mm CPS film and "The Good War and Those Who Refused to Fight It"

It has been almost two years since Paradigm Productions in California asked if we had any film footage of Civilian Public Service (CPS) camps during World War II. They wanted to make a one-hour documentary for PBS television on conscientious objectors (COs). I knew of black and white CPS photographs, but I found we did not have any films.

I called a few older persons involved in CPS to ask if they knew of such films. Eventually the names of Elizabeth and Ralph Hernley came up. They had been giving some of their older personal papers and photographs to the archives, and I

remembered they had been involved in CPS. They had a number of old 8mm films documenting their time of service in four CPS camps from 1941-46. These had been transferred onto a VHS video in the 1990s. Paradigm Productions was interested



Audiovisual Archives: 8mm film of CPS Camp #22, Henry, Illinois (1941), color slide of CPS Camp #4, Grottoes, Virginia, (1941); VHS video cassette of fifty years of Women's Missionary and Service Commission, 1927-77, in Allegheny Mennonite Conference (1977) and a master mini digital video (DV) cassette of the WMSC video.

in previewing the images on a copy of the VHS video. They then decided to transfer the original 8mm films onto a beta format in a lab in California (since the beta was of higher quality than VHS). In the end, they used two minutes and ten seconds of this footage for their one-hour film. To quote one of the assistants who worked at the archives, Kent Holsopple; "Fifteen seconds of film footage is a life-time" when it comes to moving images.

So yes, old 8mm films as they sit in the canister can be very valuable, depending what is on them.

Slide Sets: Allegheny Mennonite Conference WMSC, The First Fifty Years

Over a year ago, Mervin J. Hostetler from Virginia came to the archives and asked about the slide set that he

and his wife, Fern, had produced for the fiftieth anniversary of the Women's Missionary and Service Commission in the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, 1927-77. He wanted to have these slides transferred to a more modern format.

The Allegheny Conference collection contained two Kodak carousel trays filled with slides of this anniversary celebration and a reel-to-reel tape to be synchronized with the trays. The narration was done by Fern Hostetler and Elta Graybill.

About six months later, Hostetler sent the archives a VHS videocassette, as well as a DV cassette. A media lab had transferred the 153 slides and the narration into digital images on a computer – about six to eight gigabytes of memory. This could then be transferred onto a digital video cassette which can hold about 5,000 times more than a floppy disk. From this digital image one can then make a VHS cassette. This permanent digital image of the slides can then be used by a computer, instead of a slide projector. However, this transfer into digital images can be quite expensive, but this is the forefront of current technology. (For example, Paradigm Productions could

not afford digital technology to make their movie, and had opted for the beta format.)

This project shows how one can bring old WMSC slides from the past and convert them so they can continue to be viewed by the next generation.

Slides: Fiftieth Anniversary of PAX, 1951-2001

I recently visited with Philip A. Roth from Pennsylvania. He had served in the PAX program under Mennonite Central Committee in Peru and Paraguay from 1954-56 and had some slides as well as 8mm films of his time there. He wanted to know in what form the archives wanted the slides – the originals, video transfer, or digital on a computer disk.

I told him it is important to keep the

original slides and 8mm films and to deposit them in an archives. These originals have been around for fifty years, and I expect can be preserved for another fifty years. Despite the rapidly changing technology, one can always go back to these originals and convert them into the latest format. He could also have these slides and 8mm film transferred onto VHS format, which is an easy-to-use medium.

One of the very important things, however, is to provide a script for slides. A description of each slide is needed, giving the meaning of the photograph, names of people, and the situation. Explain the significance of the place or the specific work being done. Not all of your slides may be useful. Pick out the important ones and use them to tell a story. Number each slide. Include a written explanation of each. Roth went


through a tray of his slides and in an hour told me the story of his time of PAX service in Paraguay.

This then is how one can make slides into an archival collection. The images themselves may be archival just as they are. However, if you also provide a script, it can become a story of your faith pilgrimage, and how this particular time may have changed your life and the life of others.

Roth is in the process of having his materials transferred onto video. He hopes to put the narration right on the video as the images are being shown.

Conclusion

These are three examples of how audiovisuals can become historically valuable and be placed into archival collections. Content, description, and format are important factors.

Two audiovisual collections at the archives that are particularly rich are found in the Mennonite Central Committee collection and the Mennonite Board of Missions collection. Examples of personal collections include the Peter Dyck 8mm and 16mm film collection of Mennonite Central Committee in Europe, 1941-70, and the Paton Yoder 8mm films from India, 1937-59, as taken by Jonathan and Rhea Yoder. 

—Stoesz has served as archivist since 1989.



Ten PAX men headed for Peru following a dedication service at Lititz Mennonite Church, Pennsylvania, on July 1, 1954. In front are C. N. Hostetter (left), from Mennonite Central Committee, and R. G. LeTourneau (right) (from Peru) who would take the men first to the manufacturing and training plant at Long View, Texas, before taking them to Peru for their PAX service. The men (l-r): Cloy Roth, Nebraska; Carl Hooley, Indiana; Willard Ebersole, Illinois; Harry Bert, Pennsylvania; Jake Funk, Manitoba; William Nofziger, Ohio; Paul Fry, Pennsylvania; Bruce Boshart, California; Philip Roth, Pennsylvania; and Edwin Ratzlaff, Minnesota. (Source: MCC Photograph Collection, Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana)

I Wish I'd Been There:

"Negro slavery's prophet of deliverance"

by Timothy Paul Erdel

I wish I'd been there with George Liele (ca. 1750-1828) during his astonishing ministry in Jamaica (1783-1828). A Virginia-born slave with an itinerant early life, he was converted in Georgia (1773) while attending the church of his master, Henry Sharp. Ordained in 1775 within the same predominantly white Baptist congregation to preach to fellow slaves of African descent, by the time his master freed him in 1778 he had already helped establish three "African Baptist" congregations.

After serving with British loyalists, Liele became an indentured servant to secure passage to Jamaica with his wife and four children, landing in January 1783, a decade before the fabled William Carey arrived in India. There he rapidly repaid his debt and served the remainder of his life as a self-supporting missionary to slaves.

His multi-faceted labors were simply astounding. By 1814 there were perhaps some 8,000 converts, called "Ethiopian Baptists" or "Native Baptists" (names confusingly applied to other groups as well, some heterodox and syncretistic). Church members recited and affirmed Liele's remarkable twenty-one section Covenant of the Anabaptist Church. He also set up schools for slaves and ex-slaves, and even founded a mission to Africa, yet never limited his outreach to persons of African descent. Though carefully cultivating the good will of masters and eschewing direct calls for abolition,



George Liele (ca. 1750-1828), Anabaptist "prophet of deliverance." (Credit: George Liele: Pioneer Missionary to Jamaica by Clement Gayle)

his work still became so threatening to slavery that he was repeatedly harassed and imprisoned, once over three years, earning the title, "Negro slavery's prophet of deliverance."

His diverse spiritual heirs include Sam Sharpe (ca. 1808-32), whose plan for general passive resistance turned violent against his will and became the Great Slave Rebellion in 1831 (Sharpe was then hung by the British), and Native Baptist pacifists Paul Bogle and George William Gordon, who met similar fates when their Morant Bay Rebellion was brutally crushed in 1865. All three are now formally recognized as

national heroes of Jamaica.

I wish I'd been there to query Liele about his insightful Covenant, which he probably started to compile in 1777 and completed by 1784. The document begins, "We are of the Anabaptist persuasion, because we believe it agreeable to the Scriptures," and is filled with such trademark Anabaptist practices as believer's baptism, foot-washing, refusing to shed blood, not swearing at all, forgoing legal suits, plain dress, and church discipline, while still displaying Liele's own editorial voice and stamp throughout, including statements on anointing the sick, slavery, and sexual purity.

Others have puzzled as to why Liele is so frequently overlooked by Baptists, church historians, and missiologists. But I often wonder why his memory and example have not been vigorously claimed by biblical, peace-and-justice loving, missionary-minded, socially concerned, ethnically sensitive Mennonites and Anabaptists everywhere. ☞

—*Timothy Paul Erdel is an archivist and philosopher at Bethel College, Indiana. An MK from Ecuador, he served with his wife (Sally) and three children (Sarah Beth, Rachel, and Matthew) under World Partners at Jamaica Theological Seminary and Caribbean Graduate School of Theology (1987-93).*

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Sam(uel)" *Blackwell Dictionary of Evangelical Biography: 1730-1860*. Edited by Donald M. Lewis. 2 vols. Oxford: Blackwell Reference.

Gayle, Clement. 1982. *George Liele: Pioneer Missionary to Jamaica*. With a Foreword by R. A. Anglin. Kingston, Jamaica: Jamaica Baptist Union.

Neely, Alan. 1998. "Liele, George" *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*. Edited by Gerald H. Anderson. New York: Macmillan Reference USA.

I Wish I'd Been There: Celebrating a Life Lost

by Mary Swartley

I wish I had been with the Mennonites at Hereford, Pennsylvania to celebrate the life of Annie C. Funk in 1912 after she lost her life as a passenger on the Titanic on her return home from a term of service in India.

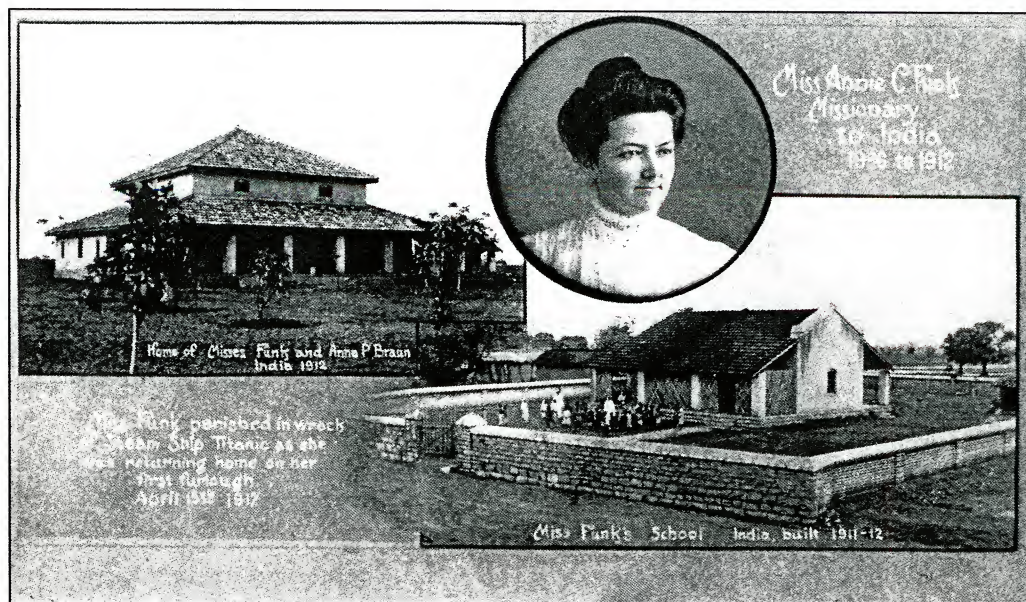
Annie Funk was born April 12, 1874 and grew up about three miles from the Hereford Mennonite Church, in Bally, Pennsylvania. Annie had been a courageous young woman of eastern Pennsylvania. Even before she was appointed by the General Conference Mennonite Mission Board for her assignment in India, Annie had served among the blacks in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and with

the YWCA at Patterson, New Jersey. Annie was a woman who was willing to move outside the comforts of her home community to respond to the call of God.

Annie had studied missions in a training school in Northfield, Massachusetts. She had also been to New York City and worked with the Methodists there. Missions was a

new thing among Mennonites, but Annie caught the vision and waited until after she was thirty to be appointed for her assignment to India. She left in November 1906. John Ruth writes that when another woman who intended to travel with Annie could not go because of illness, Annie chose to go by herself.¹

In India, Annie traveled on a bicycle donated by the young people of the



Annie Funk, her home and school in Janjgir, India. (Credit: Mennonite Library and Archives, Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas)

Quakertown and Philadelphia congregations, founded a girls' school, and wrote enthusiastic letters home. In 1912, Annie was called home because of the illness of her mother. In England she unexpectedly was given passage on the maiden voyage of the *Titanic* because a coal strike had delayed passage on the *S.S. Haverford* on which she was booked.

When the *Titanic* struck an iceberg and began to sink, there were not enough lifeboats for all the passengers. Unconfirmed reports indicate that Annie relinquished her seat on a lifeboat to a mother with children. Her friends back in Pennsylvania said, "It was just like Annie to do something like that."

Annie was a dedicated and beloved worker in India. The Girls' School at Janjgir, which she founded in 1908, was later named the Annie C. Funk Memorial School.

The memorial service for Annie Funk was probably the largest memorial service in the history of the Hereford congregation. The community that surrounded and nurtured her should feel proud of the Annie Funk legacy. Annie's faith is symbolized by her reply to a friend from Pennsylvania who was concerned about the dangerous ocean voyage in 1906. Annie replied, "Our heavenly Father is as near to us on sea as on land. My trust is in Him. I have no fear."² ⑤

— Mary Swartley is a retired high school business teacher/administrator, currently serving on the Indiana-Michigan Conference Executive Committee and studying part time at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Mary was co-editor of a recent *Herald Press* book, *She Has Done A Good Thing*.

Notes:

1 Ruth, John L, *Maintaining The Right Fellowship*, Herald Press, 1984, pp. 413-415.

2 Krabill, Russell R., *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, Volume V, Herald Press, 1990, p. 891.

Mennonite Mirth: You know you are an aging Mennonite when...

by Jep Hostetler

Numerous lists of "You know you are getting older when..." exist. These purport to inform us regarding the aging process. These lists include everything from infirmities to foibles that may or may not be unique to older folks. It occurred to me that the list for aging Mennonites has yet to be published. In an attempt to fill this obvious void, the following list is suggested as a beginning.

You know you are an aging Mennonite when:

— You remember *Life Songs* #2. I remember, as a child, creating

rubblings by placing a piece of paper over the face of the songbook and rubbing with a pencil. This created a nifty replica of title as well as the large number 2. Do any congregations still use this hymnal?

On a given signal the house was surrounded by Mennonite, nonresistant, stealthy, young folks, bent on making the loudest racket they could muster.

— You remember that page 112 in *Life Songs* #2 is "Wonderful the Matchless Grace of Jesus."

This was a golden opportunity for a pubescent boy to attempt to keep up with the basses as they rumbled through the scale of "Wonderful the matchless grace of Jesus, deeper than the mighty rolling sea..." as the women climbed through the high parts; and then to the crescendo ending with the women searching for the most elusive "Praise, his name" high note as Mrs. B's loud voice outshone all the rest.

— The "amen corner" was more than a corner.

Up front, to the right, that is where the older elders (always men, of course) sat to give

affirmation to the preacher. In the earliest days of my memory there were still audible “amens” coming from the amen corner. When Rev. W. would hold forth with louder and louder preaching, and the tempo picked up a bit, more and more “amens” came from this part of the sanctuary.

– Women and girls sat on one side of the church while men and boys sat on the other.

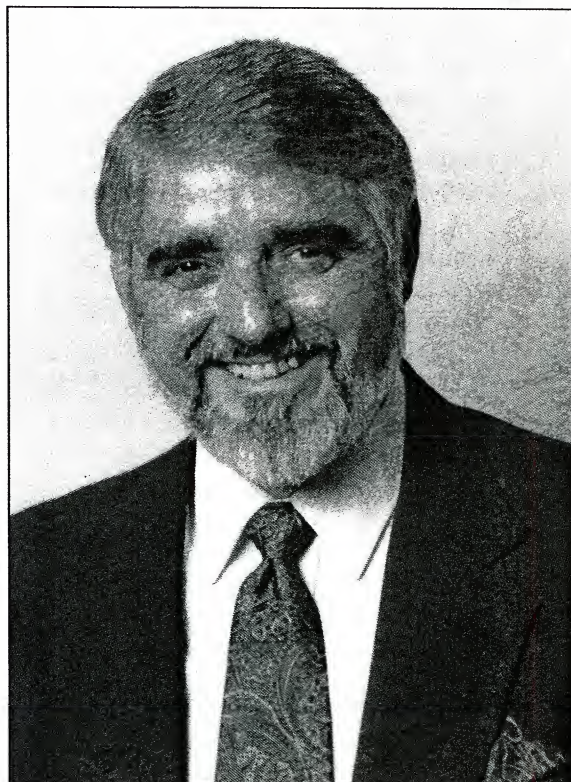
Clearly, this was segregation of the sexes in the sanctuary. It was never clear to me why this arrangement was practiced. In fact, no one was able to explain to this fourteen-year-old boy, the theology behind this arrangement.

– Hymnsings were monthly after-the-Sunday-evening-service events.

Since there were numerous Mennonite churches in our community, it was customary to have hymnsings on a rotating, monthly basis. Following the early Sunday evening service, we would all jump into cars and head for the designated church for the hymnsing. Afterwards, clusters of high school boys and girls would stand around outside the church, each eyeing the other in an attempt to get up the courage to make some kind of verbal connection. Courage meant leaving the security of the boys’ (read men’s) group and approach a particular young lady. The approach always included an

invitation to take the particular young lady home.

– You remember the “holy kiss.”



Unlike many of my male counterparts, the holy kiss seemed to me to be a sacred greeting. My memory still retains this image – one of community, goodwill, and sacred greeting.

– Newly married couples were surprised by “bellings.”

Once a newly married couple was settled into their new home (or mobile home, or living with a relative), a particular night was chosen for the young people to sneak up on the location. On a given signal the house was surrounded by Mennonite,

nonresistant, stealthy, young folks, bent on making the loudest racket they could muster. When the signal was given, they would pounce on the home, ringing bells, blowing whistles, banging pans or drums, or shaking anything that could make a splendid racket. The startled, unsuspecting couple was expected to emerge from their hideout, express their total surprise, and invite the perpetrators in for ice cream or watermelon.

– Nearly everyone went to church on Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday evening.

Normal routine included attending each of the services, plus it was uncommon to miss Sunday school for any reason, especially if one were attending the worship service on the same day.

What items would make your list? Do you have any humorous memories of abandoned traditions? Please send them to the writer at hostetler.2@osu.edu 📧

—Jep Hostetler, Ph.D., Columbus, Ohio, is a humor consultant and author. He is an associate professor emeritus at the Ohio State University College of Medicine. He and his wife Joyce serve as staff persons for the Mennonite Medical Association.

Historic Events and Highlights at Nashville 2001

Nashville 2001 was full of historic moments. In addition to these moments, numerous events were planned by the Historical Committee—a special dinner, seminars and storytelling sessions.

Historical Committee Dinner

Speakers for the Historical Committee dinner were John A. Lapp and I. P. Asheervadam. Lapp is the coordinator of the Global Mennonite History Project (GMHP), and Asheervadam is the writer for the volume on India. Asheervadam is professor of Church History at the Mennonite Brethren Centenary Bible College, Shamshabad, India.

The goal of the project is to publish five volumes, one for each continent. It is hoped that two volumes will be ready for the fourteenth Mennonite World Conference to be held Bulawayo, Zimbabwe in 2003.

Unlike previous histories, this project will focus on the church rather than the missionary experience. The writers will be free to critique earlier histories written by North American and European historians. The GMHP will be based on new research, including oral sources, which in traditional historiography have been undervalued or ignored.

Asheervadam's goal is to tell the story of India from the point of view of the disenfranchised—the lowest of the cast members. Jaimie Prieto, of San Jose, Costa Rica, also wants to tell the story of the church in Latin America from the point of view of people on the margins—women, children and non-leaders. Prieto, whose volume is one of the first two

scheduled for publication has already collected 450 interviews.

Seminars

The Historical Committee sponsored two seminars, 1) "Drinking Anabaptist Tea and Other Tales of Integration," and 2) "Gathering at the Hearth: Stories That Tell Us Who We Are."

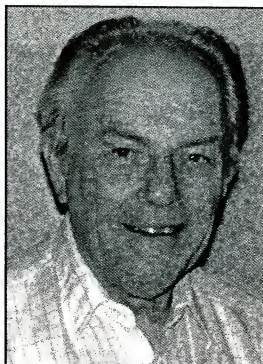
Both seminars were well attended. In the first seminar, the director sketched numerous events that drew the two denominations together, including serving with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), and in Civilian Public Service (CPS), studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), and membership in dually-affiliated congregations. The seminar also included reflections of numerous people, who were impacted by experiences that created a readiness to become one new church. In the second seminar Lawrence Hart and John Ruth told stories that were moving and provocative.

Stories on the Schleithem Stage

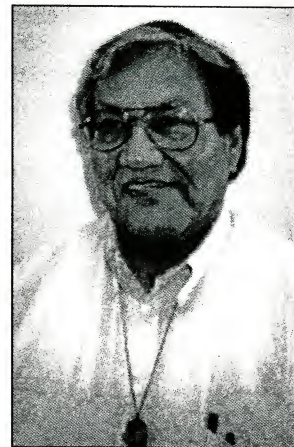
The director was scheduled to tell stories, primarily from the book,



Speakers, John A. Lapp and I. P. Asheervadam



John Ruth

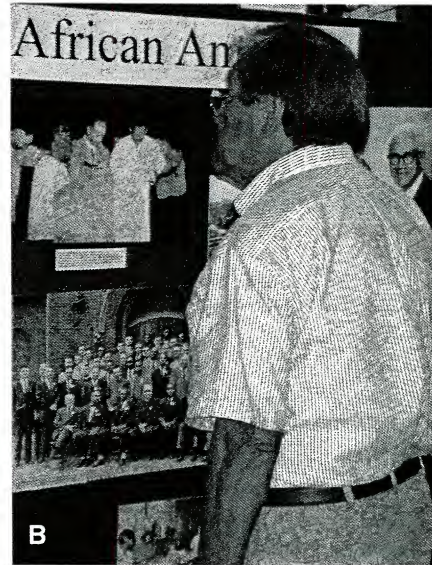


Lawrence Hart

Gathering at the Hearth, to adults and children.

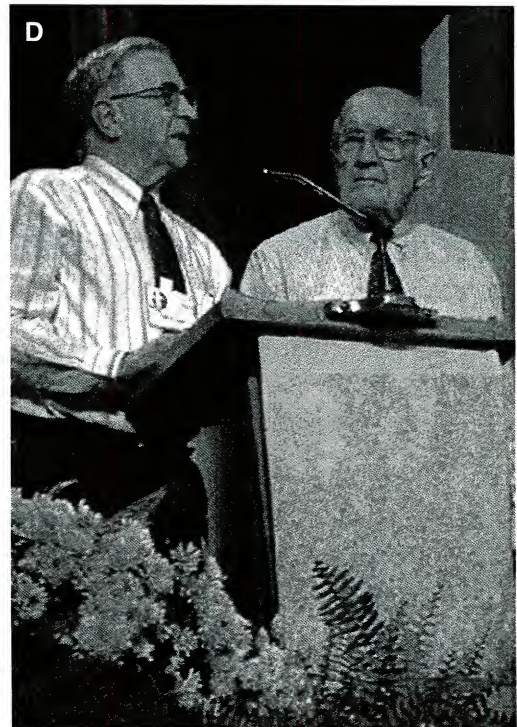
Reflections on the Journey

After the momentous vote on the "Plan of Merger" (GC—96%, MC—95%) sages John A. Lapp and Robert Kreider reflected on the journey together—both as denominations and as persons. They gave thanks for God's leading. They gave words of affirmation for what has already happened, and they noted challenges that lie ahead. —jes



Images from Nashville 2001

- A: Nancy Rodriguez-Lora prays a blessing on the united Hispanic group.
- B: Lawrence Hart views the Historical Committee & Archives display at Nashville.
- C: For the record. Bill Zuercher keeps minutes of the historic assembly.
- D: Lapp and Kreider reflecting on the journey.
- E: The Transformation Team has finished its work. First row, left to right: Ted Stuckey, Jim Schrag, Tim Burkholder, Ron Byler. Second row: George Stoltzfus, Miriam Martin. Third row: Donella Clemens. Top row: Karl Sommers, Jim Harder.



I Wish I'd Been There: A Balodgahan Welcome

by Eldon E. Hostetler

I wish I could have been present at the Mennonite Mission Compound in Balodgahan, India on July 10, 1909. Four years earlier the Mennonite Mission Board had purchased an entire 800-acre Indian village for \$2,600. That morning, a large number of Balodgahan natives rose early in the morning and proceeded to decorate both sides of the lane leading into the mission compound. At the yard gate they erected a huge arch decorated with assorted greenery supporting a large WELCOME sign. On both sides of the arch, they set up leaf-covered posts with flags stuck on the top. At the far end of the lane toward the road, another arch held a similar welcome sign. This decorating was done by native people all at their own expense, all in anticipation of welcoming home two very special people.

When word was received by telephone that the honored guests were leaving Sundarganj by tonga, people began pouring out of the city to greet them. By the time the guests arrived in Balodgahan, from three to four hundred cheering natives were following their tonga. Before entering the mission compound, a short welcoming service was held after which the honoree and his wife greeted the cheering crowd. To show that their appreciation was genuine, many surged forward to express their "salaams," some presenting gifts of money to the Memsahah, in all amounting to nearly four dollars.

No, the natives were not welcoming English royalty. The recipients of this celebration were two very humble, Mennonite missionaries, who just happened to be returning home from a seventeen-month furlough in the United States. Former Nebraska

farmer Mahlon Lapp and his wife, Sarah (Hohn) Lapp, had served as "resident landlords" of the village of Balodgahan for the past four years. The Lapps, who arrived in India in 1901, had earned this respect "the old-fashioned way," by honest, hard work and by tender, loving deed. 🙏

—Eldon Hostetler is a retired Nebraska farmer living in Milford. Eldon serves as president of the Nebraska Mennonite Historical Society and edits the historical newsletter published twice each year. Eldon is the author of three books: Early Milford Stories, a history of the town of Milford; A Good Place to be From, a story of the Milford Mennonite experience; and Pioneer Farmers in Faithful Evangelism, the story of the Roseland, Nebraska Mennonite church.

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The Back Page

In this issue Mary Swartley writes of Mennonite missionary Annie Funk, who died in the *Titanic* disaster in 1912 ("I Wish I'd Been There: Celebrating a lost life")

Coincidentally, Opryland Hotel, the site of Nashville 2001, is currently hosting a traveling exhibit featuring artifacts recovered in recent years from the *Titanic*.

I wondered, is there any evidence of Annie's presence on that ill-fated voyage? I had to find out.

As visitors entered the exhibit each of us was given a replica of a boarding pass with the name of


one passenger on each pass. I wanted Annie's pass, but was told I had to take the name I was given. We were to carry the name with us through the exhibit. In the final exhibit room the all the passengers were listed on a

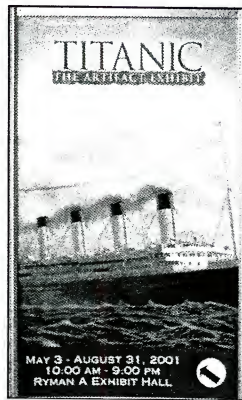
wall—those who survived and those who didn't. And there it was, on the wall of casualties of second class passengers: Annie C. Funk.

The exhibit was well done—even impressive. It told the story of the building of the ship, it's voyage,

the disaster, and the recovery of the artifacts. At the end of the tour, I spoke with a cashier in the gift shop. When I told her the

story of Annie Funk, she asked would I like to have her boarding pass? Of course, I would! She shuffled through a new pack of passes in alphabetical order. There it was: "Miss Annie C. Funk."

I read the replica reflectively, reverently. What were Annie's thoughts as she carried her boarding pass on board the great "floating palace of the seas," which was said to be virtually indestructible? Surely the grandeur of the ship was shadowed by thoughts of her mother's health. What were her final thoughts? Her last words? And what impact would this event have on her beloved students in India? On her family? On those who hear the story nearly 90 years later? 
-jes



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Mennonite Historical Bulletin

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URL: www.goshen.edu/mcarchives/
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MENNONITE

Historical Bulletin

Vol. LXII

October 2001

ISSN 0025-9357

No. 4

“Bloody Theater” And Christian Discipleship¹

by Gerald J.
Biesecker-Mast

THE POPULARITY OF MARTYRDOM

As the twentieth century faded and the twenty-first century dawned, many North American Christians—living in the midst of unprecedented prosperity, prestige, and comfort—renewed their interest in the martyr story as a way of giving meaning to Christian faith and life. Among evangelical Christians, for example, the story of Cassie Bernall—the young teenager who was said to have acknowledged her belief in God before being gunned down at Columbine High School—revived a popular interest in martyrdom that spilled over into mainstream American culture. *She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall*, a book authored by Cassie’s mother and focusing on Cassie’s journey from troubled teenager to youthful Christian made the *New York Times* Best Seller list.² A similar book about Cassie’s classmate Rachel who was also a Christian and also killed at Columbine has joined numerous other popular books about the Columbine shootings. Popular Christian music groups have helped to promote these martyr stories. Christian artist Michael W. Smith penned the afterword to the latest version of *She Said Yes*, describing his experience of singing at the memorial service for Columbine vic-



Against the backdrop of the 1660 *Martyrs Mirror*, the new century has seen an emergence of a renewed interest in martyrdom. Among recent books is Misty Bernall’s *She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall*, and Brad Gregory’s *Salvation at Stake*.

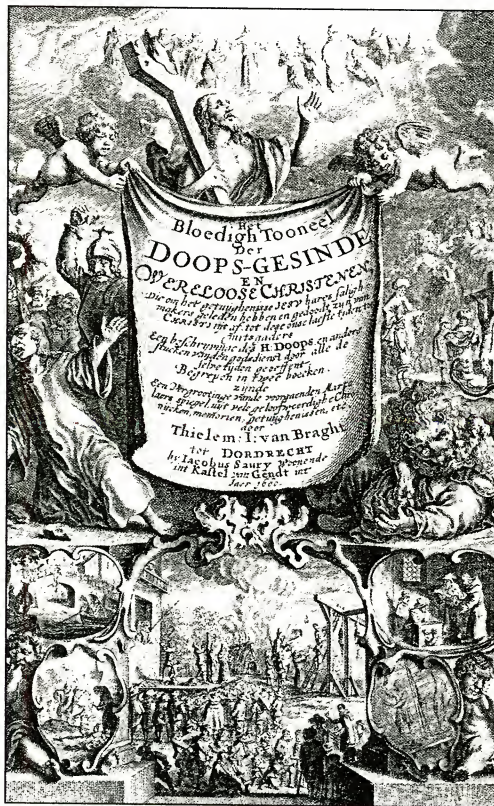
tims. The contemporary Christian music band D.C. Talk released a collection of martyr stories entitled *Jesus Freaks*, which draws from the long history of the Christian martyr tradition and cites as one of its sources the *Martyrs Mirror*.³

North American evangelical Christians have been attracted to the martyr story for some time. As a youngster I remember reading numerous books from evangelical publishing houses about the martyrdom of modern Christians, who were usually either missionaries or believers living in communist regimes. Elizabeth Elliot’s book *Through Gates of Splendor* told the story of the killing of her husband Jim Elliot and his fel-

low missionaries by the Auca Indians in the 1950s. Richard Wurmbrand’s organization, The Voice of the Martyrs, promoted books and provided stories that described in vivid detail the persecution of evangelical Christians behind the Iron Curtain. I remember a book telling the story of Judith, a young Jewish woman who was converted to Christianity and eventually murdered by communist soldiers because of her missionary work.⁴ Corrie ten Boom’s book *The Hiding Place* described the brutal persecution of a Dutch Christian family who hid Jews during the Holocaust. Many of these earlier books were published while evangelicals still saw themselves as marginal in American culture and such martyr

stories presumably helped to reinforce that sense of opposition between the church and surrounding culture. What is perhaps surprising is that at this time when evangelical Christians have come to dominate the religious and cultural landscape of the United States, the martyr story still seems to have persuasive power.

Of course, it is not just evangelicals who are fascinated with martyrs. A recent book published by Orbis—a Catholic publishing house—is entitled *Martyrs*.⁵ It collects the stories of over twenty Christian martyrs of the twentieth century, including people like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Jr., Oscar Romero, and Steven Biko. And evangelicals share with mainline Protestants and Catholics, as well as with Anabaptists, a long and honored martyr tradition, captured for Protestants in the pages of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, and for Catholics in collected writings about the lives of saints. The first detailed comparative study of three distinctive Christian martyrological traditions—Protestant, Anabaptist, and Catholic—has just been published by Brad Gregory, a young history professor at Stanford University. This book, entitled *Salvation at Stake*,



Thielemans J. van Braght in his preface to the *Martyrs Mirror* compares the dark yet hopeful scenes of Christian martyrdom with the merry comedies and pleasurable performances of the Greek theatre.

demonstrates how significant martyr stories have been for these three distinctive Christian traditions and argues that if we are to adequately understand the continuing divisions among Catholics, Protestants, and Anabaptists, we must develop a better appreciation for how fiercely the

stories of martyrdom secured these divisions, especially since these stories often included as the villainous perpetrators members of one of the other Christian communities.⁶

MARTYRDOM AND MENNONITE IDENTITY

It is within this broader context of Christian martyr stories—both in its ancient form going back through the Reformation to the early church and in its contemporary popular manifestations—that we can place the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition of martyr narratives and images. Like other Christians we have relied on the strength and courage of martyrs to help us remember who we are, what we believe, and why it is important. Like other Christians, we have updated our martyrs' roll with stories of the persecution of twentieth-century Russian Mennonites by Stalin, of the torture and death of the Hofer brothers at the hands of the U.S. military during World War II, and of the disappearance of young MCC worker Clayton Kratz in 1920 during his term of relief work in the Ukraine. During the 1990s Mennonites invested themselves significantly in reconsidering the tradition of the martyr story. This has included a number of communication venues: the *Mirror of the Martyrs* exhibit and its magnificent

The *Mennonite Historical Bulletin* is published quarterly by the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, and distributed to the members of the Mennonite Church Historical Association.

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Dues for subscription-membership in the Mennonite Church Historical Association (\$25 annual), inquiries, articles, or news items should be sent to the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church, 1700 South Main, Goshen, IN 46526. Telephone (219) 535-7477, FAX (219) 535-7756, E-mail: johannes@goshen.edu, URL: www.goshen.edu/mcarchives/

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Maria and Ursula van Beckum, 1544. Might we come to see these stories and images as “bloody theater”—as a drama that has been staged for our benefit, that inspires us to dream and fantasize, and ignites hope and desire for what could yet be?

catalog, at least two different CDs of martyr music, a play that has made the rounds at the Mennonite colleges called *Dirk's Exodus*, and numerous books that popularize the accounts of martyrdom from the *Martyrs Mirror*.⁷ The latest item I'm aware of is a lower-priced paperback edition of the *Martyrs Mirror* itself.

All of this interest in martyr stories raises the question of why North American Christians in general and Mennonites in particular remain fascinated with martyrdom, with the giving up of one's life in the name of a greater good, a higher cause, and the right thing. Why would people living in the midst of great wealth and unprecedented consumption be drawn to accounts of faithful disciples who gave up their property, their loved ones, indeed their very lives, for the sake of their beliefs?

James Lowry offers one of the most persuasive answers I have seen to this question in his analysis of the two dramatic phrases which appear in the title of the book: *Martyrs Mirror* and

Bloody Theater. Lowry provides a splendid survey of the use of the word “mirror” in biblical, Anabaptist, and other historical sources and also suggests why “Martyrs Mirror” has won out over “Bloody Theater” as the title by which the book is best known. For Lowry, the metaphor of the mirror captures the power of the martyr accounts to challenge us by encouraging us to compare our lives with those of the martyrs. “When we look into a literal mirror we see ourselves as we are—rather than as we ought to be,” Lowry writes. “We need another image for what we ought to be.”⁸ For Lowry the biblical picture of Jesus as well as the images of the martyrs who witnessed to the way of the cross provide this “figurative mirror.”⁹ As a person who studies the communicative and persuasive power of North American consumer culture, I might add that during a time when slick advertising floods our minds with superficial images that make us unhappy with who we are, popular martyr stories can provide a therapeutic response by offering the authenticity of commitments

worth dying for in a culture that insists everything worthwhile can be bought or sold.

But if Lowry celebrates the power of these martyrs' stories to name our allegiance to Christ and to provide reflections of who we want to be, others have been less certain that such stories are helpful to church identity any longer. At a time when the church has taken up significant social responsibilities within the social order how can it be helped by stories that focus on the evil of the world and the persecution of church?

In an essay of response to the staging of *Dirk's Exodus* at Bethel College, which appeared in *Mennonite Life* back in 1992, Melvin Goering argued that “the theological assumptions and social context of Mennonites at the end of the 20th century are so different” from the world of the martyrs that the stories of these martyrs no longer provide useful guidance.¹⁰ According to Goering, the assimilation of Mennonites into the North American societal institutions has challenged traditional two-kingdom theology and led to a process of cultural immersion. Goering claims that the stories of the martyrs emphasize two-kingdom dualism, a sharp dichotomy between good and evil, rejection of earthly authority, purity over prudence, preaching rather than dialogue, and the individual over community. As such, he writes, “the messages call people to psychological patterns which do not foster cooperative institutional life, certainly not life with those outside the church.”¹¹ Perhaps most damning of Goering's critiques is that the martyr story fosters a quest for theological purity that detracts from generosity to others, promoting justice for the poor, and involvement in necessarily compromised political action and social change movements. Finally Goering argues that the new context of cultural immersion requires stories that

“assist Mennonites to obedience with flexibility, beliefs without dogmatism, faithfulness within culture, ethical leadership within institutions, love and justice within social structures, conviction in the midst of ambiguity, dialogue without arrogance, care without condescension, openness without disintegration” and “responsible caring for God’s creation—the world.”¹² The martyr tradition represented by the story of Dirk Willems “is not such a story,” Goering concludes.¹³

Whether we agree with Goering’s conclusion or not, we must acknowledge that there is some truth in his description of the effect of the martyr tradition on Mennonites. There is no doubt in my mind that the present struggles over Mennonite Church integration are symptomatic of “psychological patterns which do not foster cooperative institutional life.” Mennonites who have been shaped by the martyr tradition are often not the polite, liberal, tolerant, flexible citizens that Goering hopes culturally assimilated Mennonites might become. And insofar as prosperous and comfortable Mennonites have identified too easily with dispossessed and persecuted martyrs, dysfunctional psychic complexes are sure to develop—from unwarranted self-righteousness to unwarranted self-loathing. Looking at ourselves in the *Martyrs Mirror* may indeed lead us to complacency about a heroic heritage or to despair at ever measuring up. For this reason, I want to suggest that the time has come for North American Mennonites not to turn away from the *Martyrs Mirror* but rather to shift our perspective. Rather than only seeking in vain to identify with the martyrs, perhaps we should take up honestly the position of spectator, looking at the terrifying and triumphant images from a safe distance and wondering at what we see. In short, we might come to see these stories and images as “bloody the-



Massacres at Salzburg, 1528. We can see these martyrs as heroes of the faith, even larger than life, transcending circumstance and constraint to make an outstanding witness.

ater”—as a drama that has been staged for our benefit, that inspires us to dream and fantasize, and ignites hope and desire for what could yet be. Such a perspective is certainly encouraged by Thieleman J. van Braght in his preface to the *Martyrs Mirror*, where he compares the dark yet hopeful scenes of Christian martyrdom with the merry comedies and pleasurable performances of the Greek theatre.¹⁴ Moreover, in the first edition of the *Martyrs Mirror*, van Braght privileges the words “Bloody Theater” as the first phrase in a very lengthy title in which “Martyrs Mirror” actually appeared down near the bottom, thirteen lines from the top. While later editions of the book moved the phrase “Martyrs Mirror” back toward the top as the second phrase in the title, “Bloody Theater” remains to this day as the first phrase in the title.

Without discounting the value of the “mirror” metaphor I want to highlight two gains that we might make in thinking of these martyr scenes as theatrical spectacles for which we are more the audience and less the participant. First of all, we can begin to understand these stories and pictures

as captivating human dramas in which we come to admire the central characters for their extraordinary courage and stamina, people who “went boldly onward to meet their death” or, having escaped death, nevertheless “bear the marks of Jesus, their Saviour, on their bodies.”¹⁵ In other words, we can simply see these martyrs as heroes of the faith, even larger than life, transcending circumstance and constraint to make an outstanding witness. Secondly, having been persuaded by the witness of these martyrs, we can seek to live as if their stories were true, to assume that there are commitments worth having that are greater than life itself, and to recognize the triumph of stubborn defenselessness over brute force. In being convicted of the truth of the martyrs’ witness, it is less important that we are able to see ourselves as capable of martyrdom—an identification encouraged by the “mirror” metaphor—and more important that we see the martyrs’ witness as speaking into our own time. Indeed, while many of these martyr stories were originally told and published to encourage and inspire a persecuted church, the *Martyrs Mirror* in its present form was originally com-

piled for an audience of increasingly wealthy Mennonites living in the Dutch Golden Age in circumstances that in many respects more closely resemble our own than those of the martyrs. While van Braght himself sought identification with the martyrs and urged solidarity with their witness, he also wrote passionately “of the greater danger there is at this time than in the bloody and distressing times of the martyrs,” a time during which “arises that shameful and vast commerce which extends far beyond the sea into other parts of the world, but which notwithstanding cannot satisfy those who love it.”¹⁶ Among the symptoms of this “shameful commerce” are “numerous large, expensive, and ornamented houses,” the “wearing of clothes from foreign countries,” “strange fashions” that “are as changeable as the moon,” and “the giving and attending great dinners, lavish banquets and wedding-feasts... where everything is in profusion, and where the beneficent gifts of the Lord which should not be used otherwise than with great thankfulness, and of which a portion naturally belongs to the poor, are squandered and consumed without the least necessity, even by those who are considered sober and temperate...”¹⁷ Does it not seem as if van Braght is describing postmodern American consumer culture? Is it not sobering to consider that our time may be a time of greater challenge and danger for disciples of Jesus than was the perilous sixteenth century for Anabaptists and other radicalized Christians?

During the remaining part of this essay, I want to suggest how the martyr witness might speak to our own dangerous time by suggesting some ways in which their dramatic performance of faithfulness under violent persecution by religious tyrants might inspire us to an equally dramatic performance of faithfulness in face of manipulative seduction by

consumer culture.

BLOODY THEATER AS ALTERITY POLITICS

In a book entitled *Alterity Politics: Ethics and Performative Subjectivity*, Jeffrey Nealon contrasts the focus on identity politics that characterized much of the 1990s cultural and political climate in North America with what he describes as a performance-centered politics. While identity politics plays the game of difference to shore up social selfhood, a performance-centered alterity politics “considers identity as beholden and responsive first of all to the other.”¹⁸ This move from identity politics to alterity politics corresponds to the shift from mirror to theater in the radical Christian discipleship of performance for which I am calling. Elsewhere I have argued that such a discipleship of performance makes our bodies members of Christ’s body, vulnerable in our corporate and bodily witness to the world created and loved by God, a world from which we have also been set apart in the sense that we are called to make God’s love known in both word and deed.¹⁹ I use the term performance to describe our discipleship because I think it can help us better grasp the bodily, material character of our witness and perhaps extend into the worship of our everyday lives a stronger sense of the roles we play in the drama of God’s redemptive story.

Such a performative-discipleship is characterized by consciousness of audience, attending to the response of the Other to the acts of the disciple, without simply acceding to conventional wisdom or the status quo. Similar to the alterity politics of performance described by Nealon, this performative discipleship is focused less on abstract ideals that are unachievable and more on the concrete actions that are called forth by the neighbor. As Nealon writes, “it is not a necessary failure or the resent-

ment of a broken promise that drives alterity politics; rather, it is the positive promise and concretization of different actions, practices, and organizations that orient and give force to an alterity politics of response.”²⁰ This commitment to concrete, material, bodily solidarity with the Other—with that which is on the Way—prevents an Anabaptist discipleship of performance from becoming a merely respectable adaptation of the gospel to mainstream values and comforts, an adaptation that a critique such as Goering’s seems all too prepared to accommodate in my view. Indeed, for Anabaptists, such a solidarity with the Other has most often been expressed in terms of conscientious objection to any program, institution, law, or practice that conscripts self or neighbor into a politics of the uniform, a rendering of the Other as the same, whether by baptizing the child or by killing the enemy. Such a comprehensive conscientious objection is the central narrative thrust of the *Martyrs Mirror* from beginning to end, to my way of thinking. And this objection is a full-bodied witness that employs both body and tongue, word and deed, to struggle defenselessly, yet stubbornly, against demonic forces and powers that blaspheme God and “regard human blood and swine’s blood about alike,” to repeat the memorable words of Menno Simons.²¹

What are the features of this stubborn witness for freedom against the politics of conscription as they are depicted in the Bloody Theater of the *Martyrs Mirror*? How might acknowledging the truth of such a drama change our own perceptions of the world within which we live and act and thus perhaps transform our ways of life? I suggest four postures that are visible in the performative, bodily witness of the martyrs in this Bloody Theater. These are not abstract ideals, commendable virtues, or theological principles so much as

they are roles taken up in a radical performance of Christian discipleship, in an alterity politics that sticks close to the ground, as it were.

POSTURES DEPICTED IN THE BLOODY THEATER

In describing postures taken up by the protagonists of the bloody theater, I am seeking to describe a social stance that takes up a position in relationship to others—whether friend, foe, neighbor or stranger—and toward the powers that reinforce the status quo—be they political, cultural, economic, or religious. Here I am trying less to convey principles on which martyred Anabaptists stood and more to notice styles of engagement or attitudes toward the social order that we may find dramatically inspiring and thus capable of reorienting our own perspectives and of refiguring our social roles.

Spectacle

The martyrs we read about in the *Martyrs Mirror* are generally self-conscious about the way their witness would be viewed by others. Today we would call them media-savvy. Far from manifesting sectarian naivete, Anabaptist martyrs gave much attention to the public character of their witness. We find, for example, that Anabaptists resisted mightily the temptation of public officials to take them away under cover of night and execute them in secret, thus avoiding a potentially dangerous public spectacle. In 1553, two Anabaptist invalids—one a bachelor named Tijs and the other a “maiden” called Beerentge—are captured by the authorities in Friesland. As the *Martyrs Mirror* tells the story, Tijs and Beerentge “were two zealous followers of Christ; for this reason they had a great desire to meet at some time for the purpose of rejoicing with each other in the Word of God.”²² This desire had gone unfulfilled since neither one was capable of traveling but after being apprehended by

Anabaptist hunters, these two were finally brought together in prison. After being sentenced to drowning, Tijs was offended by the sentence because, as he put it, “Cats and dogs are drowned.”²³ Tijs and Beerentge then petitioned for the opportunity to be executed in public at the standard place of execution, “so that they might obtain the crown with their beloved brethren, and that the people present might hear and see for what cause they died.”²⁴ This petition was refused and at midnight the authorities put the two invalids “together into a bag, with their mouths gagged, threw them into a boat, and had them cast into the moat on the outside of the wall, and having been tied to the boat, the two were dragged along the moat until death ensued.”²⁵ The story of Anabaptist resistance to secret executions is not uncommon in the *Martyrs Mirror*. Indeed, the publication and circulation of accounts of executions is itself an effort to bring to public light a witness that authorities sought to silence. For example, in the account of Digna Pieters, executed by drowning November 23, 1555 at Dordrecht, we find the following observation: “This was the end of this valiant heroine of Jesus, who, though she was secretly murdered in a tower, like Joris Wippe and others, will hereafter, in the great day of the Lord, be brought openly to light ...”

Another way that Anabaptists sought to make their witness public was to insist on public disputations with religious authorities rather than private interrogation sessions behind prison doors. Joos Kindt, burned at the stake in 1553, writes, for example that after a long interrogation by religious officials they proposed a disputation with him. Kindt reports his own answer: “Before the hall of justice, but not here.”²⁶ The officials responded that they would not take him there and asked him what he thought of the sacrament. Kindt responds in typical

provocative Anabaptist fashion: “An idol, a little flour; and if I had your oil, I would grease my shoes with it.”²⁷ As Kindt described it, “then a contention arose, and they thought to fall upon me; but I defended myself valiantly with the Word of the Lord... And the Lord gave me such a mouth to speak, that for three hours I did not make one assertion, which they were able to refute.”²⁸ One senses here a keen public relations sensibility, an effort to shape public perception of discussions between imprisoned Anabaptists and the authorities—an Anabaptist post-debate spin control if you will. Indeed, one finds many such private disputations behind prison doors which appear in the *Martyrs Mirror* because Anabaptist disputants took the time to write down how they recollected the exchange. Thus the Anabaptists actually struggled mightily to make public a witness the authorities sought to suppress and keep secret.

Those who seek to do public communication on behalf of the church today—whether they are pastors, lay leaders, denominational servants, or communication professionals—should find ample precedent in the *Martyrs Mirror* for media-relations skills. Working to present the actions of the body of Christ to the world in a persuasive light—to make an effective public witness by running a well-designed public relations campaign on behalf of God’s people is a valid and laudable calling. The reason this is so is that the church of Jesus Christ should be a fascinating and attention-getting spectacle for the world, even when it is not under persecution. The church of Jesus Christ should present itself as an attractive alternative to the regime of conspicuous consumption just as the Anabaptist martyrs took pains to present the witness of their underground church as an attractive and winsome alternative to the regime of prescribed piety in their

time.

Antagonism

The Anabaptist protagonists described in the *Martyrs Mirror* were relentless critics of all forms of tyranny and idolatry; thus, they are shown again and again to have been in a relationship of antagonism with the powers of their social order as represented by icons and symbols of authority. The Anabaptists as depicted in the drama of bloody theater were not passive victims or withdrawn separatists; rather, they engaged in public acts of civil disobedience against symbolic figures of unwarranted and overextended authority. Two engravings by Jan Luyken capture well this dimension of nonviolent antagonism to social and political and religious tyranny. Neither of these engravings were reproduced in the Herald Press version of the *Martyrs Mirror*, which is unfortunate, because they are a powerful reminder of the dramatic challenge posed by the Anabaptist movement to the social order of Reformation Europe, and also a reminder that the *Martyrs Mirror* does not really provide justification for Mennonite quietism.

The first engraving depicts Simon de Kramer, a marketplace vendor of Bergen op Zoom in the Netherlands, who made a public witness by refusing to kneel down before a communion procession as it passed through town.²⁹ According to the account in the *Martyrs Mirror*, “when the priests passed him with their idol, this Simon did not dare give divine honor to this idol made by human hands, but, according to the testimony of God presented in the holy scriptures, would worship and serve only the Lord his God.”³⁰ This defiant posture quickly gave him away as a heretic and within a few days he was burned at the stake in a public execution. I am grateful that Jan Luyken chose to represent in his engraving not Simon’s execution but rather his act of civil and religious disobedience. By looking closely at this engraving we can perhaps begin to get a feel for why the Anabaptists were experienced by authorities as such maddening and frustrating problems. There Simon stands, serenely and stubbornly, with his arms folded, with clearly no intention of kneeling, even though the good citizens of Bergen op Zoom

are horrified and even terrified by his act of impiety. “Please, Simon, kneel,” his colleagues are no doubt imploring. “Please don’t make trouble. Won’t you please just kneel down?” Simon’s response may be nonverbal, but every inch of his body is communicating a determined and confident “no.”

Simon’s act of refusal was surely an unmasking of the idolatrous powers of his time. The consecrated communion wafers being paraded down main street by the religious authorities represent nothing less than the authority and power of the civil religion of Reformation Europe. Simon’s posture of antagonism to such idolatrous mixing of civil authority with religious meaning reorients our own relationship to the icons and rituals of civil religion in our time. Whenever we refuse to say the pledge of allegiance or to sing the national anthem or to be involved in a military parade, either as spectators or participants, or to fly the American flag, or to pray during civic functions, or to pay war taxes, we are taking up a similar stance. When we engage in public demonstrations by marching against U.S.-led wars, protesting the marketing of war toys, challenging the legitimacy of the School of the Americas, standing vigil for the dying children in Iraq, and seeking repeal of the death penalty we are standing against the idolatries of violence and allegiance demanded by the powers of our own time and thus we are in those moments, like Simon, making our bodies into symbols of resistance, challenge, and refusal. Such antagonism too is a prominent posture of the protagonists in Bloody Theater.

The socially radical potential inherent in such acts of defiance and antagonism is captured well in the engraving that depicts the execution of Jorian Simons and Clement Dirks. When Jorian, a bookseller, is burned at the stake together with Clement, the authorities decide to also burn the



Two women led to their death at Bamberg, 1550. We can seek to live as if their stories were true, to assume that there are commitments worth having that are greater than life itself, and to recognize the triumph of stubborn defenselessness over brute force.

forbidden Anabaptist books being published by Jorian. The *Martyrs Mirror* describes what happened: "When the books were perceived to be on fire, there arose such an uproar among the people, that the lords took to flight, whereupon the books were thrown among the multitude, who reached for them with eagerness; so that, through divine providence, the truth, instead of being quenched, as it was sought to do, was spread the more, by the reading of so great a number of these books."³¹ This engraving captures in a truly breathtaking manner how the powers are subverted by nonviolent resistance.³² On the one hand, the authorities are able to carry out their execution. On the other hand, the execution becomes an occasion for Anabaptist books to be distributed and the agents of tyranny to be run off the scene. Put differently, Anabaptist executions in the *Martyrs Mirror* are not merely occasions in which martyrs triumph by dying willingly. Rather, we are shown that such costly witness has the concrete potential to liberate people from oppression and injustice in the here and now. I like to think of this engraving as the most explicit depiction of the political potential of radical Christianity: costly witness to the triumph of the Lamb on the one side is shown to result in social and intellectual liberation on the other side. This is an image that can sustain hope in our own time that the disciple's faith is not without material fruit even in the here and now. I am also moved by the idea that liberation can be found in books—especially Anabaptist ones, especially now when everyone is bowing down to the televisual and internet gods—but that is perhaps not the most important point here.

Defenselessness

It is in the broader context of spectacular and public resistance to overextended political authorities that we must grasp another crucial posture of

the martyr heroes in bloody theater: the defenselessness of the follower of Jesus. Perhaps the majority of the engravings by Jan Luyken depict with great pathos the submission of Anabaptists to torture and execution, rather than to recant, to betray fellow Anabaptists, or to take up the sword against the oppressor—which was a thinkable option taken up by some Anabaptists, most notably those associated with the Anabaptist kingdom at Münster.

Some Anabaptist scholars today and even some church leaders have come to doubt that nonviolence was absolutely central to pacifist Anabaptists' understanding of the gospel. While it is true that Anabaptists did not articulate in formal theological terms that peace is at the center of the gospel and thus should shape every theological category, it is clear that in the drama of salvation and redemption which they saw being played out around them, defenselessness was the most obvious and in some cases the singular criteria that distinguished the true church from the false church. Surely the Anabaptist movement came into being with the goal of reforming sacramental practices in general and baptismal theology in particular. And arguments about the validity and meaning of the sacraments appear all throughout the *Martyrs Mirror*. Yet, again and again, in the context of fierce persecution, what comes to convince pacifist Anabaptists most powerfully of the falsehood of the official religions is the willingness of church authorities to defend their theology with the sword of the prince.

One such example in which defenselessness becomes the posture that distinguishes true Christians from false Christians is found in the account of an execution of a number of unnamed believers at Rotterdam in the year 1544. Having described the clandestine assembly of Anabaptists in

Rotterdam and the subsequent betrayal and capture of the congregation, the account in the *Martyrs Mirror* sets the scene in the following narrative which I quote at length:

The defenseless sheep having thus fallen into the claws of the wolves, these, according to their nature, treated them in the most cruel manner, in order to draw them away from the truth; all of which they willingly suffered and endured in patience for the name of Jesus, in the firm hope of his imperishable kingdom. Therefore, since they could by no tortures be brought to apostasize, they were sentenced to death, which sentence was executed in the following manner: The men were beheaded with the sword at the said place, while the women, in the most cruel manner were thrown into a boat, and thrust under the ice until death followed. Thus these two assemblies, or classes of people, that is the church of God, and the congregation of Satan clearly evinced of which spirit they were children; which can easily be seen by their fruits and nature. The anti-Christians by this, that, as ravening and devouring wolves, they were born by nature to seize and destroy. The congregation of Jesus Christ by this, that, as humble sheep and lambs, dumb, and with no desire for revenge, they were thus led to the slaughter, and willingly gave their bodies for the name of the Lord.³³

Such a singular focus on violence versus nonviolence as defining the difference between Jesus' followers and Jesus' detractors is not uncommon in the stories of the *Martyrs Mirror*. As such, it is not surprising that throughout the text and in the longer title of the *Martyrs Mirror*, the word "defenseless" is a critical qualifier for the kind of Christian being described. It is important that the Anabaptist critique of sword-bearing

Christians is understood for what it was in its historical context: a critique of Christians who sought to enforce their views with the sword. Rather than being seen as a sectarian statement the Anabaptist position here should be seen rather as the condition of possibility for any meaningful ecumenicity: Christians who conclude disputations and arguments and discussions by executing their opponents (or handing them over to be killed) cannot be seen as followers of Jesus nor can they be taken seriously as partners in ecumenical discussion. I would add that while this defenselessness would clearly rule out participation in any kind of military force, it also has implications for struggles in the United States about the public sanction of religious expression or training. Such public sanction of religious ritual also has the effect of delegitimizing and even shaming that which is not officially sanctioned or promoted. Furthermore powerful questions for interreligious and ecumenical dialogue are raised when a particular form of Christianity—say Anglo-Protestantism—has social hegemony by virtue of precedent, history, and habit. And in a time when evangelical Christians are becoming increasingly arrogant about their right to impose their religious paradigm on public life (whether it is public recital of the Lord's Prayer or insistence that civil codes reflect the presumed Christian view of exclusively heterosexual marriage, or that abortion laws reflect a particular biblical interpretation), any radical Christian witness must seek to make clear its commitment to defenselessness and its refusal to demand rights of privilege beyond those granted to any religion in a liberal democracy. At the same time I want to stress that defenselessness must be practiced always in a context of an explicit public challenge to those dimensions of the status quo which blaspheme the worth and sanctity of any of God's creatures.

Solidarity

I conclude with a direct challenge to Melvin Goering's claim that Anabaptist martyrdom was individualistic. A careful reading of the *Martyrs Mirror* will reveal that nothing could be farther from the truth. The witness of the martyrs is a witness made possible by a profound group solidarity, practices of mutual admonition and encouragement, and the extending of mutual aid both within and without the community of faith. A primary devotional genre found in the martyrs mirror is the letter of encouragement written by prisoners to one another, to their brothers and sisters in Christ, and between family members. In these letters Anabaptists urge one another to remain faithful to Christ even in the midst of great persecution and suffering and describe in detail their own experiences of struggle and survival.

The communal and social solidarity that sustained Anabaptist martyrs was made explicit quite movingly in love letters between Anabaptist marital brothers and sisters who came to see their marriage as an expression of their prior love for the brothers and sisters of Christ's struggling suffering people.


In one such letter Thomas von Imbroich, a Swiss Brethren writer imprisoned and executed for his faith, wrote to his wife: "Since we are surrounded by weakness, my dear sister in the Lord, and the persistence of the old Adam is hard to put to death, it seems reasonable to me that each stir up the other with the grace he has received from the Lord, so that we do not go back to the half-way point, nor complain with Israel in the desert, for a log can indeed be placed into water that is bitter, which sweetens everything."³⁴ Imbroich's words to his "marital sister"—as Anabaptists often called their spouses—were a moving example of Anabaptist passion that was greater than the traditional mari-

tal bonds of human love between partners. He in prison and she outside could "each stir up the other" and make the bitter water sweet. The weakness of the merely human could be overcome by the companionship of these two lovers, who did not even require one another's physical presence in order to be "stirred up" by the grace they offered one another. For these two people, their partnership was an extension of the Christian fellowship they found among the people of God and thus the love they shared was indeed the fellowship of saints, not merely of husband and wife.

But such solidarity was not merely an in-group identity formation. It also included compassion and justice for the poor and oppressed and for the neighbor in need wherever he or she was found. In Anna Janz's well-known letter to her son Isaiah, she not only urged him to join "a poor, simple, cast-off little flock which is despised and rejected by the world" and to "flee the shadow of this world" but also to "let the light of the Gospel shine through you," to "love your neighbor," to "deal with an open, warm heart thy bread to the hungry," to "clothe the naked" and to avoid having two of anything, since "there are always some who lack."³⁵

This was not an individualistic Christianity but rather a radical posture of hospitality to the neighbor in the context of a defenseless antagonism to the unjust structures of the "world."

I hope I have shown that the postures of spectacle, antagonism, defenselessness, and solidarity, which are featured throughout the drama of Bloody Theater, can provide inspiration and orientation for Mennonites or any community of Christian disciples today. I also hope to have encouraged you to dig into the *Martyrs Mirror* to see what strange and wonderful stories are there. I cannot guarantee, of course, that spending a lot of time

viewing the drama of Bloody Theater will make us all polite, chastened, flexible, cheerful, and well-assimilated citizens. I do believe, however, that this is a show that can inspire greater faithfulness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. I urge you to see it for yourself! 

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Notes:

- ¹ The original form of this essay was delivered as part of a series of exhibit reflections on the Mirror of the Martyrs exhibit at the Sauder Visual Arts Center, Bluffton College, on October 29, 2000.
- ² Misty Bernal, *She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernal* (New York: Pocket Books, 1999).
- ³ de Talk and The Voice of the Martyrs, *Jesus Freaks* (Tulsa, OK: Albany Publishing, 1999).
- ⁴ N.I. Saloff-Astakoff, *Judith: Martyred Missionary of Russia* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1969).
- ⁵ Susan Bergman, ed., *Martyrs* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996).
- ⁶ Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation At Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 1-29.
- ⁷ James Lowry, *In the Whale's Belly* (Harrisonburg, VA: Christian Light Publications, 1981).
- ⁸ James Lowry, *The Martyrs Mirror Made Plain* (Aylmer, ON: Pathway Publishers, 1997), 130.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁰ Melvin Goering, "Dying to Be Pure: The Martyr Story," *Mennonite Life* (December 1992), 9.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 13.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 14-15.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 15.
- ¹⁴ Thielemann J. van Braght, *Martyrs Mirror* (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1985), 6.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 8-9.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 9-10.
- ¹⁸ Jeffrey Nealon, *Alterity Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 2.

- ¹⁹ Gerald Biesecker-Mast, "Recovering the Anabaptist Body (To Separate It For the World)," in Susan Biesecker-Mast and Gerald Biesecker-Mast, eds., *Anabaptists and Postmodernity* (Telford, PA: Pandora Press U.S., 193-213).
- ²⁰ Nealon, 15.
- ²¹ Leonard Verduin, trans., and J.C. Wenger, ed., *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons* (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1956), 198.
- ²² van Braght, 539.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 540.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 545.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁹ John S. Oyer and Robert S. Kreider, *Mirror of the Martyrs* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 1990), 22-23.
- ³⁰ van Braght, 540.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 564.
- ³² Oyer, 77.
- ³³ van Braght, 472.
- ³⁴ Two of Imbroich's letters appear in the *Martyrs Mirror*, along with his confession and defense of baptism. This quotation was taken from a letter from Imbroich to his wife which is included in the Swiss Brethren devotional book, *Golden Apples in Silver Bowls*, but does not appear in the *Martyrs Mirror*. See Leonard Gross, editor and trans., *Golden Apples in Silver Bowls* (Lancaster, PA: Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, 1999), 125.
- ³⁵ van Braght, 454.

Will of Syvaert Pietersz

by James W. Lowry

INTRODUCTION

A wall of silence seems to surround Syvaert Pietersz of Hoorn in north Holland, as far as his personal life is concerned. We know very little about him, overshadowed as he was by his fellow minister, the much more famous and brilliant Pieter Jansz Twisck. Twisck, of course, was the prominent elder of the Old Frisian Mennonites, a widely traveled church leader, and writer of numerous books, published and unpublished.

Yet an important role is assigned to Syvaert Pietersz as co-author of the long Thirty-three Article Confession of Faith, found in the martyr books published in 1617 and 1626 at Hoorn. Sjouke Voolstra considers him to be coauthor with Twisck.¹ These Hoorn martyr books stirred controversy among the Mennonites at that time. Hans Alenson, Waterlander opponent of the Old Frisians, went to Hoorn to

visit Twisck during this controversy. When he asked Twisck point-blank, if he were the author of the confession, Twisck said no. Twisck indicated, somewhat vaguely in a hostile situation, that the author was Syvaert Pietersz. Scholars have tended to believe that although the actual writer was Syvaert Pietersz, the thought of the confession was that of Twisck and the Frisian Church.²

Twisck and Syvaert Pietersz, as Old Frisian Mennonites, were staunch defenders of the "Old Ground and Foundation," the doctrinal position of Menno Simons and of many Anabaptist martyrs. Syvaert Pietersz especially has been faulted for his "violent" and "prejudiced" defense of the traditional position.³

In 1998 some of the silence surrounding Syvaert Pietersz was broken with the discovery of his last will and testament in the West Frisian Archives at Hoorn. The will supplies a number of interesting details about his per-

sonal life. For example, he was a cloth merchant as was Pieter Twisck. His dwelling in Hoorn, presumably with his dry goods store, extended from the street called Het Oude Noort to a parallel street, Het Nieuwe Noort, but fronting on Het Oude Noort. Alenson says that Twisck was Pietersz's neighbor,⁴ and so Twisck's home was also in this vicinity. Previously we knew only that Twisck was born in another part of Hoorn in a house called "de Klomp" on the street named op 't Oost.⁶ So the will brings a few new details to light about these early leaders.

The document also makes an interesting connection with the inner life of the Old Frisian church there in Hoorn, foreshadowing the first of the twelve articles adopted a few years later (in 1639) by the North Holland Old Frisian Mennonite Society. The article says, "When a brother or a sister shall marry a second time, before he or she marries, he or she shall disclose to the children the father or

mother's inheritance so that afterwards no disunity arise. . . ."⁷ In much the same spirit Syvaert Pietersz and his wife worked out details concerning the inheritance with the children. Parents and children agreed together to the management and distribution of property before the will was registered.

The will must also relate to ideas in a book published just five years earlier by Pieter Twisck. The book gives Twisck's thinking on the relationship between parents and children. Twisck very likely preached the same views in the church at Hoorn in the presence of his fellow minister Syvaert Pietersz and his children. The book, *A Father's Gift*, emphasizes the duties of children to parents, but also touches on parents' obligations to their children. Further advice that Twisck gave in this book published in 1622 is as follows: "My dear children be friendly and kind to each other. And let no one hear any disgraceful words to each other."⁸ Twisck refers to the account of David and his brothers. David, as youngest son had to bow before the older, and yet it was not right for the older brother, Eliab, to oppress David.⁹ This is exactly the advice Syvaert Pietersz gives in his will in 1627 to his five normal children with respect to their handicapped brother and sister. After the demise of the parents, the will directs, the normal children are to care for the mute children and are not to force them to work in a way contrary to their wishes. In these early days it was not unknown for guardians to compel orphans to work very hard mainly to benefit the guardians.

In contrast to the accusations leveled against Syvaert Pietersz, the will shows him to be a loving and caring parent as he tried to provide for his handicapped children after his death. Here then is the will.


TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENT¹⁰

In the name of the Lord, amen. Today the 8th of July 1627 appeared before me, Nicolaes Ryckaerd, notary pub-

lic, admitted by the Court of Holland, residing at Hoorn in the presence of the subsequently mentioned witnesses, Mr. Syvert P[iete]rsz, cloth merchant in the Witten Waterhondt,¹¹ Anna Jacobs, his wife, married persons, man and wife, well known to me the notary, being sound of body, having full use of their reasoning, memory, and understanding, considering the shortness of human life, the certainty of death, and its uncertain hour, having accordingly with premeditation, with advice, and approval of their children want to dispose of their earthly goods with this their last testament before they are surprised by death. In the first place they entrust their souls to God, their gracious Father, [and desire] that their bodies have a Christian burial; further they ordain as their only and universal heirs, establish and nominate their present seven children, or their descendants in their parents' place, in equal shares, and as mortmain will show, clearly understanding that their two mute children, Anna Syvertsdochter and Derick Syvertssoon by name, shall have share in their parents' house, where they now live and that [the house] extending from the Old to the New North [Streets] shall be valued for them at f. 3500, such that they [the mute children] shall never be shut out by anyone in the world; and when one of the two dies, that the whole and entire share of the first deceased shall fall to the longest living of the two. And if it happens that the aforesaid house by accident of lightning, thunder, or fire should have a disaster and be damaged, then they want and desire that their other children together at their own expense shall repair the aforesaid house at no cost to the aforesaid mute child or children. In case they at any time¹² hope to expect any inheritance from the aforesaid mute children, and yet should anyone of their children be unwilling in this matter and not contribute to the aforesaid repair, then they, the testators, also ordain the same unwilling one shall be excluded from whatever the aforesaid mute children should leave behind. Moreover [they]

together have asked and recommended to their children mutual love and the fear of God and especially not to be a burden or troublesome to the mute children, but to allow them to do what they desire without forcing them to do any work or [anything] otherwise beyond their wish.

Whatever is aforesaid stands certified and they declare to be their testament and final will, desiring that the same after their death be as testament, codicil, donation in the case of death or otherwise shall be carried out firmly and without change. Done at Hoorn in the presence of Mr. P[iete]r Jansz[oon] Twisch¹³ Teunis P[iete]rss, cloth merchants as witnesses thereto. Requested by me Syvert Pieterssoon [with] Anna Jacobs.

Pieter Jansz[oon] Twisck¹⁴ [and] T Pietersz[oon] C[loth] M[erchants] in the year 1627 In my presence Nicol[aes] Ryckaerd [Notary] Publi[c] 

— James W. Lowry, *Frederick Maryland, has been translating records from the Gemeentearchief (Municipal Archives) of Amsterdam—records which document the 18th century migration of Mennonites to North America.*

Notes:

1 Het woord is vlees geworden by Sjouke Voolstra (Kampen: Uitgeverij Maatschappij J.H. Kok, [1982]), pp. 79, 120, 175-176.

2 "Pieter Jansz. Twisck—Second Generation Anabaptist/Mennonite Churchman, Writer and Polemicist" by Archie Penner (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1971), pp. 260-261.

3 "Pietersz, Syvaert" *Mennonitisches Lexikon*, III, 372; *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, IV, 176.

4 Tegen-Bericht by Hans Alenson (Haarlem, 1630) in *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica*, Vol. VII, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1910), p. 156.

5 "The Wooden Shoe."

6 Penner, p. 100, footnote 2.

7 *Geschiedenis der Doopsgezinden in Holland, Zeeland, Utrecht en Gelderland* by S. Blaupot ten Cate (Amsterdam: P.N. van Kampen, 1847), II, p. 224. However, on page 226 he speaks of the articles as already existing in 1607, but perhaps the earlier date is a misprint. See also *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*, III, p. 909.

8 Twisck, Pieter Jansz. *A Father's Gift*, trans. T. Hoover (Port Trevorton, Pa., 1982), p. 43.

9 *A Father's Gift*, p. 95. Other parts of this book which bear on inheritance, orphans, and guardians are pages, 40, 55-56, 63-65.

10 This is Number 2077, page 94, of the record book of Nicolaes Ryckaerd, notary in Hoorn from 1625 to 1640 and afterwards notary in Medemblik. Archiefdienst Westfriese Gemeenten in Hoorn. A special thanks is owed to C.J.J. Stal of the Gemeentearchief in the Hague and to Maarten 't Harat of Aalsmeer in the Netherlands for their help in deciphering and translating this difficult document.

11 This may refer to the name of a house and could also be read "Witte Waterhandt."

12 whenever. The original says "t'avont off morgen."

13 This is a spelling sometimes used in the area, where there is also a village by the name Twisck.

14 Pieter Jansz Twisck had a dry goods shop in Hoorn from about 1605 until his death. M.E. IV, 757-759. The witness Teunis Pietersz could have been his son.

New Treasures: Archives of the Mennonite Church

by Dennis Stoesz, Archivist

What follows is a sampling of personal papers and organizational records that have come into the archives during the past year. They are listed alphabetically by the name of the collection.

Bethany Mennonite Church, 1917-76, Imlay City, Lapeer County, Michigan. Records, 1919, 1955-97, including the land deed of 1919 from Catharine and Peter Ropp, as given to the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Mission Board for the purpose of establishing a Mennonite church and cemetery. Files include financial reports, 1955-94; annual business meeting record books, 1974-97; a land transactions file, 1977-97; and a folder on the cemetery, including a map of the Bethany Mennonite Cemetery, a photograph of the monument erected in 1990 on the site, and a list of the twenty-seven persons buried there (as of 1992). 5 linear inches. Donor: Ruth (Lederach) and Phil Rittgers, Homosassa, Florida.

Hostetler, J. J., Goshen, Indiana. Papers, 1929-2000, including a binder of research on immigrant Jacob Hochstetler (1704-76) and two booklets containing a record of sermons preached, 1938-90, at Canton, Ohio and Peoria, Illinois (including funerals, marriages, guest ministers and visits to Canton jail, Moreland, Ohio addition, Canton infirmary and Peoria jail). Materials also include Bible studies files and subject files, 1929-2000, including a 1929 essay he wrote while at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, and his writings on various books of the Bible during the 1990s. 3.75 feet. Donor: J. J. Hostetler, Goshen, Indiana.

Parkview Mennonite Church, 1945- , Kokomo, Howard County, Indiana. Records, 1953-80, including church bulletins for this time period and some minutes of congregational and council meetings. Also includes three phonograph records produced by Mennonite Broadcasts, Inc., Harrisonburg, Virginia, and ordered by Parkview pastor Clayton Sommers. They include *This Is a Minute*, 1964 (twenty-four spots narrated by David Augsburg and written by Stanley Shenk – one-minute spot announcements with a Christian message for today) and *The Greatest Week in History: Newscasts of the First Easter Week*, 1966, as produced by The Mennonite Hour. (This contains seven spots, each lasting 6:30 minutes.)



A young couple, Minnie and Joe Graber, taken in Goshen, Indiana, probably in 1932. They served as missionaries in India 1925-32, and again 1934-42. Source: Dorothy C. (Smith) Shank Collection.

This church was earlier known as Bon Air Mennonite Church. 2.5 linear feet. Donor: Grace Whitehead, Kokomo, Indiana.

PAX Archives, 1945-2001. Papers, diaries, reports, photographs, slides, videos, displays and artifacts, 1945-2001, from twenty-five PAX men and women who served under this program in various parts of the world from 1951 to 1976; administered by Mennonite Central Committee. Shows work in Germany (Enkenbach, Espelkamp, Gronau, Kaiserslautern, Neumuhle, and Zeilsheim), Austria (Annaberg, Karlsschule in Vienna, and Windischgarten), Congo (Bakwanga and Leo), Greece (Airdea, Panayitsa, and Tsakonea), and Pakistan. Materials began to be collected at PAX 50 Reunion held



Workers at Portland, Oregon, Mission, 1936-39. Persons (l-r): (unknown), Myrtle Miller, Bernice Widmer, Ferne Whitaker and Glenn Whitaker. Source: Glenn and Ferne (Zimmerman) Whitaker Collection.



Boys and Girls' Club, Calvary Mennonite Church, Normandie Avenue, Los Angeles, California, 1939-45. Source: Glenn and Ferne (Zimmerman) Whitaker Collection.

at Syracuse, Indiana, September 13-16, 2001. 4.5 linear feet. Donor: Albert N. Keim, Harrisonburg, Virginia and PAX 50 Committee with Calvin Redekop, chair, Harrisonburg, Virginia; Orville Schmidt, secretary, Wakarusa, Indiana; and Walter Schmucker, treasurer, Goshen, Indiana.

Shank, Dorothy C. (Smith), 1911-, Goshen, Indiana. Diaries, scrapbooks and photographs, 1924-51, dating to when she attended the Goshen College Academy (graduating in 1928) and Goshen College (graduating in 1932). Diaries are from 1926 and 1930-32. Also includes some

correspondence, 1929-51 and two 1931 photograph albums of when she spent a summer with friends Verna Smith, Agnes Weaver and Eleanor Schertz as chambermaids (cleaning ladies) at Albemarle Hotel in New Jersey. Also includes photographs from the 1938 trip to Colorado with Pearl Smith, and a photograph album of her 1939 western trip with the Colfax party: Willard, Verna and Dorothy Smith, and Esther, Lena and Ann Graber. Collection also includes two wedding scrapbooks, 1940, when she married Lauren Shank. 1.25 linear feet. Donor: John J. Smith, Goshen, Indiana.

Smith, Tilman R., 1902-2000, Goshen, Indiana. Film and original phonograph recordings, 1948-50, of which the 16mm film *Schools March On* features Smith as a superintendent of schools in Woodford County, Illinois, in 1950. Phonograph records are of the June 1948 meeting of Mennonite Board of Missions in Mackinaw Dells, Wisconsin (6 sides) which featured the Metamora Mennonite Church chorus "God Is Waiting in the Silence" and "Launch Out into the Deep" and also featuring Eastern Mennonite College "A Rose" and "Ninety and Nine." Original recordings probably done by Ray Ulrich, Metamora, Illinois. Also included is a recording of the C. Henry Smith memorial, 1948 (2 sides). 1.25 linear feet. Donor: John J. Smith, Goshen, Indiana.

Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen, Elkhart County, Indiana. Records, 1963-99, as collected by Wilmer Hollinger who served on various committees in the church through the years. Includes minutes and reports from board of elders, church council, gifts discernment, church coordinator, constitution revision, covenant committee, and congregational meetings. 2.5 linear feet. Donor: Wilmer Hollinger, Goshen, Indiana.



PAX boys serving at Espelkamp, Germany, 1951-. Front row (l-r): Luke Rhodes, Melvin Helmuth, Willie Rush, Marvin Goehring, Carl Yoder (Blackie). Second row (l-r): Willard Stuckey, Arnold Roth, Eldo Kroker, Menno Gaddert, Richard Oberholzer, Pete Neufeld. Back row (l-r): Howard Landis, Robert Swartz, Carl Yoder, John Mann, Paul Hollingshead. Source: PAX Archives Collection.



Group of children with Pastor Glenn Whitaker (on right) at Calvary Mennonite Church, 73rd Street, Los Angeles, California, 1939-45. Source: Glenn and Ferne (Zimmerman) Whitaker Collection.

Whitaker, Glenn, 1909-79, and Ferne (Zimmerman) Whitaker, Pueblo, Colorado.

Papers, photographs, phonograph recordings, and artifacts, 1936-72, of their mission work in the cities of Portland, Oregon, 1936-39, Los Angeles, California, 1939-45, and Wichita, Kansas, 1948-51. Materials show their work with boys' and girls' clubs, and with the summer camping programs in Oregon, and at Arroyo Seco and Hidden Valley in California. Includes constitution of Calvary Mennonite Church (1943) and photographs of the two churches, one on 73rd Street and the other on Normandie Avenue in Los Angeles. Original phonograph recordings include a spring 1943 conference at Harrisonburg,

Virginia, made by Whitaker when he was director of Civilian Public Service camp #45, at Luray, Virginia. Persons featured on the recordings include E. M. Yost, A. C. Good, Maurice O'Connell, Ivan Moon, etc. Later recordings are dated from 1948 to 1951, when Whitaker began a radio ministry in Wichita, Kansas. These also include the Crusader Male Quartet (1950) and the Hesston College choir (about 1950). 7 linear feet. Donor: Warren Whitaker, Pueblo, Colorado. *L*

— Dennis Stoesz has been archivist since 1989 and is a member of East Goshen Mennonite Church.

I Wish I'd Been There: The First Amish Worship Service in Elkhart County

by Daniel E. Hochstetler

It was Easter Sunday, March 27, 1842. The youthful congregation of about fourteen members, and likely twice that many children, was meeting at the home of Preacher Joseph Miller east of Goshen, Indiana. The four families who had moved from Pennsylvania in June 1841 had been joined by five more families from Ohio that fall, and at that time they held their first worship service in Lagrange County.

These rugged pioneer farmers who were carving out homesteads on both sides of the Elkhart-Lagrange county line had survived their first winter and were now meeting for worship on Easter Sunday for the first time in the new year and for the first time in Elkhart County. From then on, they met regularly every two weeks for worship services. From these, and later arrivals, have come the wide variety of Amish and Mennonite congregations now found in northern Indiana.

While the oldest man in the group was forty, most of the nine couples in this new settlement were in their late twenties or early thirties. Each family had from two to eight children, with a total of thirty-five. This new congregation also had two preachers and a deacon. Isaac Smucker, 32, had been ordained in Ohio, and he preached the opening sermon. Joseph Miller, 34, had been ordained in Pennsylvania and delivered the main sermon. Although there is no record to verify it, Deacon Joseph Borntrager likely read the scripture text between the sermons. They probably sang from the familiar *Ausbund*,

and the second song was certainly "The Loblied." The form of worship, the light lunch at noon, and the dialect used in socializing were likely similar to what I experienced in my earliest memories a century later in the same area.




Marking the place of the first meeting on Easter Sunday, March 27, 1843.

The count of fourteen members present indicates that four adults were absent. Two of these likely were Jonas and Elizabeth Hochstetler, my great-great-grandparents, for they had less than a week earlier welcomed a new baby into their family. Two years later Jonas was to become the first Amish minister ordained in Indiana.

I wish I could have been there at this early meeting, which was setting the precedent for the years to come. No doubt these early arrivals, as well as the dozens of families who came from the east in following years, had high hopes for their community on the frontier. A scouting quartet in 1840 from Somerset County, Pennsylvania had gone as far as Iowa and on their way home were attracted to the land in Indiana, and "agreed to make this region the future home for their church."

However, quite soon it became evident that the ones from Pennsylvania

and the ones from Ohio had different ideas of how to "do church," and the county line became the dividing line for two congregations. By the 1850s, as in other Amish communities, further differences became evident between "change-minded" and "tradition-minded" persons on both sides of the county line. Bishop Isaac Smucker and Bishop Joseph Miller, co-ministers from the beginning in Indiana, became leaders of opposite sides, later known as Amish Mennonites and Old Order Amish.

I wish I could have been present at the first Amish worship service in my native Elkhart County. Could I have detected the beginnings of a major division among these devout people who had such noble ambitions? Would I have sensed ways that unity could be maintained even when there were sincere differences among God's people? Through history we hope to learn from the past to help us understand the present and give direction for the future. 

Reference:

Borntrager, John E. *A History of the First Settlers of the Amish Mennonites and the Establishment of Their First Congregation in the State of Indiana*. German edition, 1907. First English edition, 1988.

Miller, Jerry E. *Indiana Amish Directory*, Elkhart, LaGrange, and Noble Counties. Middlebury, Indiana, 1995.

—Daniel E. Hochstetler retired in 1994 after thirty-four years of teaching and is serving as the conference historian of the Indiana-Michigan Conference. He is editor of the Hochstetler/Hostetler/Hochstedler Family Newsletter and the Michiana Anabaptist Historians News and Notes.

The Back Page

In Memorium: John Andrew Hostetler, 1918-2001


John Andrew Hostetler, most widely known for his studies on the Amish (*Amish Society*, 1963) and the Hutterites (*Hutterite Society*, 1974), died August 28, 2001. He was 82. He was professor of sociology and anthropology at Temple University for 34 years. He served as chair of the Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church.

John was born near Belleville, in the Kishacoquillas Valley of central Pennsylvania. He was the son of Joseph and Nancy (Hostetler) Hostetler, an Old Order Amish family. The "Cold Water Farm" by the old cold water station of the Kishacoquillas Valley Railroad was his home for the first eleven years. When his entrepreneurial father was excommunicated from the church in 1929, the family "sold out" and moved to Kalona, Iowa. There John

was known as "Pennsylvania Joe's" son.

John's education, begun in the Ore Bank School in Pennsylvania, was continued until the eighth grade at Snake Hollow School, near Kalona. At home he read, in addition to the Bible, farm magazines, Daniel Kauffman's *Bible Doctrines*, and Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. His yearning for formal education led him off the farm, and eventually to Goshen College and to Penn State University.

Though he chose to leave his native Amish culture, and to pursue higher education, John made the Amish the subject of his university study. The most comprehensive publication on the Amish is *Amish Society* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1963), now in its fourth edition.

John was often called upon to serve as an expert witness in various court cases involving the Amish. In the landmark *Wisconsin vs. Yoder* case on education before the Supreme Court, John demonstrated his profound understanding of the gap which separates the Amish from the rest of American society. John was on the witness stand, and Attorney John William Calhoun of Wisconsin was cross-examining him. In a sharp and cynical tone, the attorney asked, "Now, Professor, don't you think that a person needs to have an education to get ahead in the world?" In typical fashion, John pondered the question, and then replied, "It all depends on which world." 

— jes

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Mennonite Historical Bulletin

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